THE HISTORY OF ISLAM

Vol. I

LIFE OF THE HOLY PROPHET

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VOL. I

LIFE OF THE HOLY PROPHET

by

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

(*With the name of God, the most Merciful, the most Compassionate.*)

PREFACE

IN my introduction to the translation of the Holy Qur-án I have included two very brief sketches of the life of the Holy Prophet which have been highly appreciated by my readers and I have often been requested to write a fuller account of the Prophet's life. I now do so with great pleasure.

New light has been thrown on the Prophet's life by the Arabic Commentaries of the Qur-án lately published in Egypt and especially by "The Life of Muhammad" in Arabic by Muhammad Hussain Haikal published in 1935. Ten thousand copies of the first edition of this work have already been sold out. I have most carefully studied this book and as my views on the Prophet's Life agree with his, I think, it is time that the English reading public should have the benefit of this new light thrown on Muhammad's life-work. The spirit which has prompted me is nothing but the search of the Truth of the Prophet's career without fear and without favour and above all without exaggeration.

It is not my business to please the Muslim or to displease the non-Muslim. Leaving aside all hatred and all prejudice, and taking the Holy Qur-án as the basis of my work I have endeavoured to paint a simple, impartial and vivid pen-picture of the life of the Prophet who should be loved by all mankind.

God willing, I wish to continue this history in a second volume entitled *The First Four Successors of Muhammad.*

of their chiefs; one gains the impression that he cared more for this than for the conversion of all the rest of the world. He left to them all that they already had; he gave them in addition whatever they asked, if only they would be his good friends. Abū Sufyán was a great man already, but Mohammed hastened to raise his power by giving him rule over a broad tract southward from Mecca. He used every means to make their conversion easy to the Koraish, and to convince them that they were losing little and gaining much. They had the sense t understand this and act accordingly; they were soon t' Moslems."

If Indian Muslims were to adopt this poli fellow countrymen in India, without yieldir attachment of Islám, they would fi becoming their best friends.

This book is written in th g Prophet's life in a straightforwar his deeds but without ients. Muhammad hated flatter ight of impudence to say thi God. He was a man, nothi d to carry out God's message ar God's command-ments. It is position the world of men is:

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I have added two appendices, the first one being a very brief justification of the Prophet's marriages and the second one containing excerpts from European writers on Muḥammad and Islám.

I may say with all humility that the descriptions of the Battles of Badr, Ohod, The Confederates, Ḥunain and other main events of the Life of Muḥammad have been given with greater accuracy and fuller detail in this book than in any other Life of Muḥammad published in the English language. I have avoided complicated and lengthy sentences and contented myself with a frank, straightforward narrative. I believe that facts speak more eloquently than any artificial embroidery on the part of a writer can ever do.

In this book, Muḥammad's character has been woven in his life-work and there is no need to add a special chapter thereon. His spiritual greatness has been described as briefly as a historian could do. I have tried to make the reader appreciate his Life and Work better than is possible in any other work extant in the English language. It is for the reader to say how far I have succeeded in my object. I now leave the work in the hands of God fully hoping that He will accept this my humblest effort in His path and for the sake of the love of His Noble Prophet Muḥammad, God's Blessings and Peace ever be upon Him and upon all the Prophets and Messengers of God and upon all His good servants.

H. G. SARWAR.

NOTE ON CORRESPONDENCE OF ENGLISH AND ARABIC DATES

DURING the life-time of Muḥammad, the Muslims fixed the date of an event by saying that it happened in such and such year and in such and such month before or after the Prophet's Hijrat or Emigration to Medina.

The Emigration took place in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal. The Prophet left Mecca on the 4th of this month in the 13th (or 14th as some calculate) year of his mission. The names of the Arabic months are:

(1) Muḥarram — (7) Rajab
(2) Ṣafar — (8) Sha'bán
(3) Rabi-ul-Awwal — (9) Ramaḍán
(4) Rabi-ul-Ākhir — (10) Shawwál
(5) Jamadi-ul-Awwal — (11) *Z*ul-Qa'da
(6) Jamadi-ul-Ākhir — (12) *Z*ul-Hijj or *Z*ul-Hijja.

The pre-Islámic Arabs put in an intercalary month every third year so as to make the Arab year agree more or less with the solar year. But the evil of this system was that the sacred months, namely the 11th, 12th, 1st and 7th of each year were shifted at their will. Warfare was forbidden in the sacred months but the intercalation of a month made a loop-hole for robbers and plunderers to declare a sacred month as unsacred.

This state of affairs was abolished by the Qur-án (Chapter 9, v. 36) in or about the 10th year of the Hegira.

The Calendar before that year most probably remained according to the custom of pre-Islámic days. So that even during Muḥammad's period of Revelation from the 40th year of his life to the 63rd, the Arab year on the average corresponded to the Solar year. Two years would consist of 354 days

each and the third year would consist of 384 days making $(354 \times 2 + 384) = 1092$ days in three years, or an average of 364 days in each year.

From 11 A.H. this system was abolished and the year was strictly calculated as equal to 12 lunar months.

But even this calculation was not officially adopted till the time of caliph Omar some 17 years or so after the Hijrat.

There is, however, no authoritative record as to which years before 10 A.H. were intercalary years and which were not.

Muslim writers often forget the fact that, during the twenty-three years of the Prophet's ministry of Islám, the years were of 364 days each on the average and not 354 days and they therefore fall into errors when giving the corresponding dates in English. It is now extremely difficult to give an exact calculation, and I have contented myself with as near an approximation to correctness as I could.

The dates which are absolutely certain in Arabic months and years are as follows :—

(1) The Prophet was born on Monday, 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal in the first year of the Elephant = 22nd April 571 after Christ according to one calculation and 29th August 570 A.C., according to another. Taking into account the intercalary months and Muhammad's age as 63 years the latter date *viz.*, 29th August 570 A.C. would seem to be the more correct one, although most Muslim writers (Syed Amir Ali excepted) adopt 22nd April 571 A.C. as the correct date.

(2) The Hijrat took place 52 years after the Prophet's birth in Rabi-ul-Awwal in the beginning of his 53rd year or September 622 A.C. which date is accepted even by Maulana Shibli Nu'mani as correct, *viz.*, 8th Rabi-ul-Awwal = 20th September 622 A.C. Therefore, the birth must have been about 29th August 570 and not 22nd April 571 A.C.

(3) The third date which is also certain is 12th Rabi-ul-

Awwal 11 A.H. (Monday), the date of the Prophet's death which is given as 8th June, 632.

It is difficult to explain the replacement of August by June, corresponding to Rabi-ul-Awwal. But the 10th year A.H. was most probably an intercalary year and Muslims had stopped adding the intercalary month from 10 A.H. and so the Muslim calculation was already one month behind. Muḥammad's death would therefore fall in July 632 A.C. It is possible that Muslim writers in their calculations have gone further back in dropping the intercalary month and they make the death of the Prophet fall in May 632 A.C. as given by Maulana Shibli Nu'mani.

For the reader's information I give the following comparative dates from Syed Amir Ali and Maulana Shibli Nu'mani's latest editions of the *Spirit of Islam*, *Siratun-Nabi* respectively.

CORRESPONDENCE OF SOME OF THE ENGLISH AND ARABIC DATES FROM SYED AMIR ALI'S "SPIRIT OF ISLAM" (NEW EDITION)

A.H.=After Hijrat, A.C.=After Christ

(1) 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal=29th August 570 A.C. the date of the Prophet's Birth (p. 8).
(2) 1 A.H.=19th April 622 to 7th May 623 A.C. (p. 56).
(3) 2 A.H.=7th May 623 to 26th April 624 A.C. (p. 59).
(4) 5th Zil-Hijja, 2 A.H.=1st April 624 A.C. (p. 67).
(5) 3 A.H.=26th April 624 to 15th April 625 A.C. (p. 68).
(6) 2 A.H. Shawwal, February 624 (p. 74).
(7) 4 A.H. Rabi-ul-Awwal=June to July 625 A.C. (p. 76).
(8) 5 A.H.=3rd May 626 to 23rd April 627 A.C. (p. 77).
(9) 5 A.H. Shawwal=2nd February 627 A.C. (p. 78).
(10) 5 A.H.=28th February 626 to 24th March 627 A.C. (p. 79).

Here, it must be noticed that Syed Amir Ali contradicts himself. He has already given 5 A.H. = 3rd May 626 to 23rd April 627 A.C. on page 777.

The explanation of this contradiction lies in the fact that Syed Amir Ali wishes the date of the Prophet's death to correspond to 8th June 632 A.C. which according to his previous calculation would fall in August 632.

(11) 6 A.H. = 23rd April 627 to 12th April 628 A.C. (p. 83).
(12) 7 A.H. = 12th April 628 to 1st May 629 A.C. (p. 92).
(13) 9 A.H. = 20th April 630 to 9th April 631 A.C. (p. 101).
(14) 10 A.H. = 9th April 631 to 29th March 632 A.C.
(15) 11 A.H. = 29th March 632 to 18th March 333 A.C. (p. 115).
(16) 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal 11 A.H. = 8th June 632 A.C. the date of Muḥammad's death.

In the above table 8 A.H. is not given but it is apparently

8 A.H. = 12th May A.C. to 20th April 630 A.C.

so that no allowance has been made for an intercalary month from 8 to 11 A.H. both inclusive. But if Syed Amir Ali is right, the 10th year A.H. should have been an intercalary month and 20 days should have been added to it. If that were done the date of Muḥammad's death would be 28th June 632.

The correct date, however, is nearer 28th August 632 than 28th June, 632.

CORRESPONDENCE OF DATES FROM MAULANA SHIBLI NU'MANI:

(1) Date of Prophet's Birth, 9th Rabi-ul-Awwal = 20th April 571 A.C.
(2) Muḥammad's Entry into Quba near Medina, 8th Rabi-ul-Awwal, 13th year of Muḥammad's mission = 20th September 622 A.C.

(3) Date of Ibrahim's Death = 7th January 632 A.C. (Eclipse of the sun).

This date would seem to put the Prophet's death as in August 632 and not May 632 as given by Maulana Shibli Nu'mani (12th Rabi-ul-Awwal 13 A.H. = May 632).

The fact which comes out most prominently from the data given above is that the English dates given by me and other writers are merely proximate and not absolutely correct. The difference, however, is always a question of a few months, seldom exceeding three, and the years are almost always correct except the year of the Birth of the Prophet which in my opinion should be 570 A.C. and not 571 A.C. The date of his death is also probably some day in August 632 and not 8th June 632. The Prophet is said to have died on the day of his Birth, Monday (in each case) 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal.

In any case, there will always be the difficulty of finding out which years of the Prophet's life were intercalary years and which were not and in case of anyone counting an intercalary year as unintercalary, there would be a difference of 30 days when giving the corresponding English date. Much importance need not be attached to this difficulty. The Arabic dates are generally well agreed upon.

CHAPTER I

ARABIA

THE GENERAL SHAPE OF ARABIA

A LOOK at the map of the Old World will convince the reader that the Peninsula known as Arabia occupies a unique position with regard to the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. It is situated in Asia, yet nothing but the narrow Red Sea divides it from Africa, whilst one has only to cross the Suez Canal to be in the Mediterranean Sea and Europe. It is thus almost the centre of the three continents and yet stands apart from all of them. It is surrounded by water on all sides except a narrow strip of land on the north. It has the Red Sea in the west, the Indian Ocean in the south and the south-east, the Persian Gulf and the Euphrates on the north-east. The Arabs call it *Jazirat ul-'Arab* which literally means the Arabian Island. Yet this land surrounded by water on all sides except the north has no rivers of its own. It has an area of 120,000 square miles, or more, but its produce is not sufficient to support its scanty population.

Ancient empires and civilizations flourished in Persia, Egypt and Rome but they did not conquer the whole of Arabia. The cause for this comparative independence of Arabia lies in the fact that excepting for the province of

I—1

Yemen which has some fertile land, the rest of Arabia consists of barren hills, deserts and valleys in which there is no cultivation, or only such cultivation as can last as long as there is rain water collected in the hollows of the land. When this water, through lack of further rain, dries up, and which happens often, the population has to shift to new pastures. The greater part of the population lives in tents and is nomadic, and the camel is its ship of the desert. It is a land in which the production of the means of livelihood is entirely dependent on rain water.

Arabia is, has been, and will always continue to be a country of caravans. Yet in this very desert of a land, God has built for ever the spiritual home of all mankind, *viz.*, the Ka'ba at Mecca—the centre of attraction, the centre of self-sacrifice, the centre of love, the centre of the union of the human and the Divine Soul.

THE PROVINCES AND DESERTS OF ARABIA

THE best-known provinces of Arabia are Ḥijáz, Yemen, Najd, Ḥaḍr Maut, 'Ummán, Najrán, Asīr, Yamáma, Khaibar, Ḥijr and Al-Aḥqáf. Of the deserts, the largest in size is called Ad-Dahna or Ar-Rub ul-Khálī. But the whole country is a desert in one sense.

Mesopotamia and Syria were once considered to be parts of Arabia but are no longer counted as such. Most of the provinces which have been named above lie on the fringe of the country, the centre being desert. Starting with the Persian Gulf and going round as does the clock we find first Baḥrain on the shores of the

Persian Gulf, the town of Kweit lies to the north of Baḥrain. We then pass through 'Ummán with the famous town of Muscaṭ as its capital. Further round is the vast territory of Ḥaḍr Maut with Mukkala as its port. To the north-west of Ḥaḍr Maut is Al-Aḥqáf, once the country of 'Ád. Further round and to the south-west of Arabia is the fertile land of Yemen. Aden, Hudaida, Ṣan'á and Mocca (famous for its coffee) are situated in Yemen. Further north is Al-Ḥijáz on the coast of the Red Sea with Mecca, Medīna, Jeddah, Ṭáif and Yanbū' as its chief towns.

Between Yemen and Al-Ḥijáz is the small province of Al-Asīr. To the north-east of Medīna is the territory of Khaibar. North of Medīna on the way to Shám or Syria is Ḥijr, the town of the prophet Ṣáleḥ and his people Thamūd. Further north is Tabūk. West of Ḥijr is Madyan, the place of the prophet Shu'aib. In the centre or rather in the centre of southern Arabia is the great desert of Ad-Dahna and to its north is Najd with Riyáḍ as its capital. Ibn Sa'ūd the present ruler of Ḥijáz comes from Riyáḍ.

THE CLIMATE OF ARABIA AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ARABS

THE climate of Arabia is extremely dry except in some coastal towns and watered valleys. Dates are the chief production but Ṭáif and some other places produce a number of fruits. The people are very hardy and individualistic, loving liberty and freedom from restraint. If the English are a nation of shop-keepers,

the Arabs might be called a nation of traders and this is especially true of the people of Mecca whose sole means of livelihood is trade fostered by the pilgrimage to Mecca.

THE LANGUAGE OF ARABIA

But the thing that distinguishes Arabia above all other countries in the world is Arabic. Latin, Greek and Sanskrit are highly inflexional languages. The Arabic language, however, is not only inflexional but has another peculiarity of its own not possessed by any Aryan or Mongolian tongue. In Arabic, all words, excepting particles, proper names and names of birds and animals and things for which there can only be one word, are derived from roots which can be moulded to express every kind of meaning which the root is capable of expressing. In this way, Arabic is capable of immense expansion without any increase of its roots. And it can express in one word what other languages do in two, three or four words. It appears as if the Arabs, having little agriculture to attend to and less building to erect, have spent all their skill and all their energy in the building and cultivation of their language. Very few historians of Arabia have paid attention to the enormous influence of the Arabic language on the lives of the people of Arabia, but it is a factor which is of the greatest importance in all matters concerning Arabs.

CHAPTER II

THE ANCESTORS OF THE ARABS

THE Arabs are the descendants of Noah. Historians have divided Arabs into three categories: (1) 'Arab *Báida*, or Aboriginal Arabs, (2) 'Arab '*Ariba*, or those who made Arabia their home and adopted Arabic as their language, (3) 'Arab *Musta'riba*, or settlers.

'Arab Báida

'ARAB *Báida* were all descendants of Laz, son of Sám, son of Noah. They have been divided into tribes, the names of which are:—

(1) 'Ád,
(2) Thamūd,
(3) Abail,
(4) Amalaqa,
(5) Tasam,
(6) Judais,
(7) Umaim,
(8) Jurham,
(9) Ḥaḍr Maut,
(10) Ḥadhur,
(11) 'Abd Ẓakham, and others.

Of these 'Ád and Thamūd are repeatedly mentioned in the Qur-án. Prophet Hūd was sent to 'Ád and Ṣáleḥ to Thamūd.

'Ád and Thamūd

THE following passages in the Qur-án show that they were both powerful peoples worshipping idols and building

stone temples and houses on rocks and out of rocks.

Says Hūd to 'Ád:

> Do you build on every height a sign for no use at all?
> And you make strongholds as if you were not going to die.
> And when you lay hold (on people)
> You lay hold tyrannically.
> Therefore reverence God and obey me
> And reverence Him Who has provided you with what you know.
> He has provided you with cattle and sons,
> And gardens and springs.
>
> (Qur-án, 26 : 128 to 134.)

But 'Ád would not believe and, though the prophet warned them of a coming storm, they would not listen to him and were destroyed. Another passage in the Qur-án refers to 'Ád in the following words:

> Hast thou not seen how thy Lord did with 'Ād
> (And) the people of Eram possessors of lofty columns,
> Such as have not been made in any other cities?
>
> (Qur-án, 89 : 6 to 8.)

The people of the prophet Ṣáleḥ called Thamūd lived in Ḥijr:

> And Thamūd who hewed out huge rocks in the valley?
>
> (Qur-án, 89 : 9.)

And Ṣáleḥ said to Thamūd:

> Are you going to be left in the state in which you are in this life, secure?
> In gardens and springs

And fields (of corn) and palm trees with tender spadices?
And you hew out houses out of mountains with great show.
Therefore reverence God and obey me,
And obey not the command of those who are unrestrained:
Who do evil in the land and do not do good.
(Qur-án, *26* : 146 to 152.)

But they would not believe and though the prophet warned them of a coming thunder and earthquake, they would not follow him and were destroyed.

It is stated that 'Ád were a very powerful and tall race the like of which did not exist anywhere else.

'Arab 'Ariba

IT appears that at some ancient date, another family of the children of Sám, son of Noah, migrated into Arabia and adopted the language of the land, *viz.*, Arabic. This latter family is said to have been the descendants of Qaḥṭán or Yuqtán. Yuqtán was the son of 'Abar son of Shálikh son of Arfakhshad son of Sám son of Noah.

Ya'rab conquered or destroyed all the descendants of Laz son of Sám son of Noah and settled on the land. The language of the forefathers of Ya'rab was not Arabic but Arabic seems to have conquered the conquerors who gave up their original tongue in favour of Arabic. Some say that Ya'rab and Yemen are synonymous terms and there cannot be any doubt that Yemen was the home of Ya'rab and his immediate successors. Yemen is the only part of Arabia

where there is sufficient rain water all the year round for the foundation of a kingdom. Sabá was the capital of the Queen of Sheeba as mentioned in the Qur-án. One tribe of this family ruled over Yemen and Ḥaḍr Maut. Another tribe called Azd conquered Medīna and settled there. Another tribe called Khuza' defeated Jurham and conquered Mecca. Nasr the son of Azd conquered Yamáma. Umrán the son of Khuza' conquered 'Ummán.

It will be seen that the provinces of Arabia are named after the names of the conquerors and it is certain that at the time of Muḥammad's birth the children of Qaḥṭán were the most powerful tribes in Arabia and that even now the greater part of the population of Arabia is descended from them. How the ancestors of Prophet Muḥammad are connected with these 'Arab *'Ariba* will be explained in the next section.

'Arab Musta'riba

ABOUT four thousand years ago there was a prosperous kingdom in the land now called Mesopotamia. The language spoken there was not Arabic but some form of ancient Persian and the people worshipped idols and heavenly bodies. In that land, and at that time, there was born a child called Ibráhīm or Abraham. He was also descended from Noah. His father called Ádhar was a carpenter or sculptor engaged in making images for the idol-worshippers. The son, however, was a searcher of the Truth and doubted the veracity of the faith of his forefathers. He would not worship the stars, the moon

or the Sun, because they were themselves subject to some superior power who ordered their rising and their setting. He would not worship the idols as these could not speak, eat, or help themselves in any way. God had destined him to be the Patriarch of the True Religion. What are now called Judaism, Christianity and Muhammadanism are mere names. The true religion or faith is the Faith of Abraham and its eternal name is Islám—Submission to God and peace amongst all Mankind. The Qur-án preaches the faith of Abraham. In fact, there is no other faith and Muḥammad came (as we shall see later) not to found a new religion but to convert the idol-worshippers to the faith of Abraham and to unite the Christians and the Jews under the banner of Islám—the faith of Abraham.

> And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, you will find the path."
> Say, "Not so, the faith (is the faith) of Abraham the single-minded."
> And he was not of the pagans.
>
> (Qur-án, 2 : 135.)
>
> And who turns away from the faith of Abraham
> Save one who makes a fool of himself?
>
> (Qur-án, 2 : 130.)
>
> And when his Lord taught Abraham certain words,
> Then he carried them out :
> Said He : "I am surely going to make thee a leader of men." (Qur-án, 2 : 124.)

So that, the life of Muḥammad is, according to the Qur-án, nothing but the continuation of the life-work of Abraham.

HOW DID ABRAHAM COME TO ARABIA ?

He was driven out of his land by his father and his father's companions.

> And remember Abraham in the Book.
> He was truthful (also a) prophet.
> When he said to his father : " O my father ! why dost thou worship that which hears not, and sees not and cannot avail thee aught ?
> O my father ! surely as to me, knowledge has been given to me which has not been given to thee,
> Therefore follow me, I will guide thee on the perfect path.
> O my father ! worship not the evil one. Surely the evil one is disobedient to Arráḥmán (the most Merciful).
> O my father ! I am surely afraid that a suffering from Arráḥmán (the most Merciful) will touch thee,
> Then thou shalt be an ally of the evil one."
> He replied : " Art thou turned away from my deities, O Abraham ?
> Surely if thou desist not I will stone thee to death,
> And get away from me for a long long time."
>
> (Qur-án, 19 : 41 to 46.)

So Abraham left his father and his country, but not before he had taught them a lesson as described in Chapter 21 of the Qur-án, vv. 51 to 75. One day, when they had gone out to a fair, Abraham entered their temple and broke all the idols into pieces except the principal one. When people came back and found the idols broken, they were enraged ; and Abraham was put on his trial :

> They said: "O Abraham! Is it thee who hast done this to our deities?"
> He said: "Nay, he did it (who did it),
> Here is their chief, ask them then if they can speak."
>
> (Qur-án, 21:62-63.)

But idols don't speak and so the prosecutors and judges were made to hang down their heads in disgrace and were made to say out of their own mouths what Abraham had intended them to say:

> Surely thou knowest that these speak not.
>
> (Qur-án, 21: 65.)

"Why do you worship such things then?" was Abraham's retort. They wanted to burn him but God saved him and he left with his followers and settled in Palestine. Here he remained for a long time and was very prosperous but his mission took him to Egypt where he went accompanied by his wife Sárah.

He was well received by the king of Egypt who gave him many presents, including a girl named Hájirah. Abraham returned to Palestine from Egypt. He was getting on in years but had no children from Sárah as she was barren. He, therefore, married Hájirah and God gave him his first son called Ismá'īl or Ishmael. Ishmael grew up to be a knowing, wise and faithful son, and when he had become a most comely youth, Abraham saw in a dream that he was sacrificing his only son to God. The dreams of the prophets being forebodings of the truth, Abraham with the consent of Ishmael prepared to carry it out, but God who intended to show the world how a faithful servant is prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of God substituted a sheep in place of Ishmael and

this event is annually commemorated by the sacrifice of a suitable animal by Muslims all over the world on the tenth day of the 12th month of the Muslim year.

This happened in Palestine. Sometime afterwards, Abraham, by God's order, took his son Ishmael and his second wife Hájirah to Mecca and settled them there. At this time Ishmael was about fifteen years of age. Abraham himself returned to Palestine. Ishmael's mother died soon after this. Ishmael learnt Arabic from the descendants of the tribe of Jurham and soon afterwards married Umara daughter of Sa'īd son of Asáma son of 'Aqīl of the tribe of Amalaqa.

Shortly after this marriage, Abraham returned to Mecca and Ishmael having divorced Umara married another girl named Sa'īda daughter of Madád son of Amar of the tribe of Jurham.

This marriage met with the approval of Abraham, and Muḥammad is a direct descendant of Ishmael by this second marriage. Muḥammad thus inherited Persian blood through Abraham, Egyptian blood through Hájirah the second wife of Abraham, and pure Arabic blood through Sa'īda wife of Ishmael.

Sometime after this marriage, God ordained Abraham and Ishmael to rebuild the Ka'ba at Mecca. The story of the building of the Ka'ba is described in Chapter 2, vv. 124 to 129 and references to the Ka'ba, Mecca, Ḥaj or pilgrimage and the importance of Ḥaj to all Muslims, nay to the whole mankind, uniting them in the service of one God with the Ka'ba as its spiritual centre are made in many parts of the Qur-án. When Abraham and Ishmael were building the Ka'ba, they prayed to God

for the acceptance of their service and for the continuation amongst their offspring of a people who would be obedient to God and finally for the raising amongst their offspring of a Messenger or Prophet of God who would recite God's signs to them and teach them the Book and the Wisdom and who would purify their souls. (Qur-án, 2 : 127 to 129.)

It was in fulfilment of this prayer that Muḥammad was sent to the Arabs and through them to the whole world to teach mankind God's Word and the Wisdom and to purify their souls (Qur-án 2 : 151, 3 : 163 and 62 : 2).

It is said that in obedience to God's commandment Abraham made the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca as long as he lived. He, and not Muḥammad is, therefore, under God's order the founder of the Ḥaj. (Qur-án, 22 : 26 to 33.)

MUHAMMAD'S ANCESTORS AND THE QURAISH

ISHMAEL had twelve sons and one of them was named Qaidár, one of whose descendants was 'Adnán. Muḥammad's pedigree is traced to 'Adnán in this way :

Muḥammad was the son of

(1) 'Abdullah	who was the son of
(2) 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(3) Háshim	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(4) 'Abd-Manáf	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(5) Qusai	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(6) Kiláb	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(7) Marah	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(8) Ka'b	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(9) Luwai	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(10) Ghálib	,, ,, ,, ,, ,,

(11) Fihr who was the son of
(12) Málik ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(13) Naḍr ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(14) Kanána ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(15) Khuzaima ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(16) Mudrika ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(17) Yas ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(18) Muḍar ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(19) Nizár ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(20) Mu'id ,, ,, ,, ,, ,,
(21) 'Adnán.

Fihr son of Málik above mentioned was also called Quraish and hence all his descendants are called Quraish after him.

It has already been related above that the tribe of Khuza' conquered Mecca and dispersed the descendants of 'Adnán who were scattered in various parts of Arabia.

Qusai

In the 5th century of the Christian era, Qusai, the fifth ancestor of Muḥammad, joined all the tribes of the Quraish and took possession of Ḥijáz and the custody of the Ka'ba which had been wrested from their forefathers.

Dár un-Nadwa

He rebuilt the Ka'ba. He also built a palace for himself (near the Ka'ba) in which a special room called Dár un-Nadwa was set apart as an office and an assembly house for carrying on the government of Ḥijáz. The chiefs of the Quraish used to assemble there and under

Qusai's guidance it was decided that the Quraish should feed the pilgrims for three days during the period of pilgrimage.

'Abd ud-Dár

AFTER Qusai's death, his son 'Abd ud-Dár was recognised as ruler in his father's place and when 'Abd ud-Dár died there was a dispute between his grandsons and his brother 'Abd-Manáf's sons as to the government of Ḥijáz but after the intervention of the influential people of the Quraish it was decided that 'Abd-Shams, the son of 'Abd-Manáf, should be in charge of the water supply of the pilgrims and the collection of taxes and the feeding of the pilgrims.

'Abd ud-Dár's grandsons were to look after the fighting forces of the Quraish, to take care of the Ka'ba and the Assembly House (Dár un-Nadwa). The government of Ḥijáz, and more specially of Mecca, was thus divided into two departments—Revenue and Military. The Revenue was to be in the hands of 'Abd-Shams and the Military were to be under the control of the grandsons of 'Abd ud-Dár.

Háshim

BUT not long after this arrangement, 'Abd-Shams gave up his duties to his younger brother Háshim the great-grandfather of Prophet Muḥammad.

In this way, the fulfilment of Abraham's prayer was nearing its end.

Háshim was the wisest and the most generous amongst the Arabs. It was he who organised the

merchandise of the Quraish, and every year caravans went south to Yemen and came back laden with its produce. Caravans also travelled north to Syria or Shám and brought back dried fruits, silk and other merchandise of the most valuable kind to Mecca.

Caravans also travelled east to Nejd and Mesopotamia and west to the sea-coast; and Mecca thus became the great market of Arabia. Moreover, the annual assemblage of pilgrims who came to worship their gods set up inside and outside the Ka'ba and the Great Fair held at Mena on the occasion made Mecca the most important and the richest town in Arabia. Háshim's bravery and generosity made him the beloved of all Arabia.

Omayya

BUT jealousy, like hope, always springs afresh in the human breast and Omayya, the son of 'Abd-Shams, became jealous of his uncle's good fortune and great power. He tried hard to win over the government of the revenue of Mecca into his hands but remained unsuccessful.

At last, he could refrain himself no longer and threw out an open challenge to Háshim as to who was the better man. A public meeting was called and judges were appointed to decide the issue. The loser was to forfeit fifty head of camel and to be banished from Arabia for ten years.

Each candidate delivered addresses as to his qualifications, virtues and rights. The judges decided in favour of Háshim, and Omayya had to forfeit fifty

camels and to leave the country for ten years. He went away to Syria or Shám. Háshim made a grand feast and distributed the flesh of the fifty camels amongst Meccans

'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib

HASHIM married a noble lady of Medīna and had a son from her named Shabīh. When Háshim died, his brother Muṭṭalib went and fetched Shabīh from Medīna or Yathrib as it was then called. The people thought that Shabīh was Muṭṭalib's slave and by mistake called Shabīh 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib (the servant or slave of Muṭṭalib) and he is now known as 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib only.

When 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib grew up he was as famous as his father in bravery, generosity and fairmindedness. He was the grandfather and later the guardian of Muḥammad.

Harb

HARB, the son of Omayya challenged 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and again the judges decided in favour of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and against Harb. Thus, there sprang up a great ill-feeling between the houses of Omayya and Háshim in which the Omayyads were certainly in the wrong but they had some excuse, because, if their ancestor 'Abd-Shams had not abdicated his authority in favour of Háshim they would have been the rulers of Mecca. This antagonism has had the most serious consequences in the history of Islám. It arose about half a century before the birth of Muḥammad. He and the first two Caliphs did their best to wipe it out but there

are some things beyond the control of human power and this antagonism has been one of such affairs. But it is wholly and solely a political matter and has nothing to do with religion. Those who have imported religion into the controversy have prostituted their faith.

'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and Zam-Zam

To continue our story of the descent of Muḥammad: When Abraham settled Hájirah and Ishmael at Mecca, there was a spring of drinkable water near their abode called Zam-Zam. But this spring had, during the course of centuries, been covered up with the debris of buildings and its exact situation had been lost. When 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib had the charge of supplying water to the pilgrims he naturally searched for the situation of this old spring. He and his eldest son Hárith looked for it for a long time but in vain. None of the Quraish helped them. On the other hand, they made fun of them.

One night, 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib dreamt that the Zam-Zam was situated at the place occupied by two idols, Asáf and Naila. Father and son started removing the idols and digging the ground. Their kinsmen objected to this but they continued in their search for this old spring. In the Qur-án, water is likened to God's spiritual blessing. Thus, Mecca was on the eve of the discovery of Zam-Zam, its healing water, and the birth of Muḥammad its spiritual Healer.

'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib's Vow

When 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib felt his loneliness, he made a

vow that if God (the Meccans even then believed in Alláh or God as the Supreme Deity) gave him ten sons and made him the discoverer of Zam-Zam he would sacrifice one son in God's name. Strange to say, he was successful in rediscovering the spring of Zam-Zam and in due time God gave him ten sons.

The discovery of Zam-Zam made 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib the most revered amongst the people of Mecca. When his sons came of age, he wished to carry out his vow of sacrificing one son in God's name.

He took all his sons to the Ka'ba and drew lots. The name drawn was that of his youngest son 'Abdullah (the servant of God) whom he loved most.

'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib took his son and wanted to slaughter him (as Abraham tried to do about two thousand five hundred years before). He loved his youngest son most as did the people. They tried to dissuade him from his dreadful purpose.

'Abdullah

AFTER much argument and discussion, it was decided to refer the matter to the decision of a wizard or astrologer called Shiya'. Shiya' decided that ten camels being the blood-money for one man, 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib should put ten camels on one side and 'Abdullah's name on the other and draw lots. If 'Abdullah's name was drawn, the number of camels was to be increased by ten till the camels were drawn and when that happened the camels were to be slaughtered in God's name instead of 'Abdullah.

This was accordingly done and it was not till the

number of camels had been increased to one hundred that the camels were drawn. The hundred camels were slaughtered and from that day one hundred camels were fixed as the ransom for the loss of one human life.

'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib had altogether thirteen sons born to him and six daughters.

ABRAHA'S INVASION OF MECCA

WHILST, Abd ul-Muṭṭalib was in charge of the government of the Ka'ba, and the care of the pilgrims, Abraha the Christian chief of Yemen built a shrine at Ṣan'a intending to make it the centre of attraction and of trade for the Arabs but he could not accomplish his object as long as Mecca retained its sacred position in the eyes of the Arabs.

Abraha, therefore, invaded Mecca in the year of the Prophet's birth but God destroyed his army; and Mecca was saved. The event is thus referred to in the Qur-án:

> Hast thou not seen how thy Lord did with the companions of the elephant?
> Did He not cause their stratagem to be lost?
> And He sent against them flocks of birds
> Throwing them stones of baked clay,
> And He made them like stubble eaten away.
>
> (Qur-án, Ch. 105.)

This was in the 40th year of the reign of Kisra Naushīrwán of Persia, also called the first year of the elephant, also the year of Muḥammad's birth and 570 or 571 of the Christian era.

ABDULLAH'S MARRIAGE WITH AMINA

ABDULLAH, the youngest son of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, was married to Ámina, daughter of Waháb son of 'Abd-Manáf son of Zuhrah, the chief of Bani-Zuhrah. 'Abdullah was twenty years of age and 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib was about seventy but so vigorous was the old man that the same day he married the daughter of his own uncle named Halah, who gave birth to Hamza the Prophet's uncle and later known as the Lion of Islám. 'Abdullah remained three days in the bride's house and then brought her home. Sometime after this, 'Abdullah went to exchange merchandise in Syria and left Ámina pregnant. On his way back from Syria, he stopped at Medīna with his friends where he became sick and died whilst Muḥammad was still in his mother's womb. 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib on hearing of 'Abdullah's sickness had sent his eldest son Hárith to bring him back but he brought the sad news of 'Abdullah's death to the old man's sorrow and Ámina's grief.

CHAPTER III

THE AGE OF IGNORANCE

I. POLITICAL STATUS OF ARABIA IN THE 6TH CENTURY OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA

THE true history of Arabia begins with Islám. There was nothing but chaos before Muḥammad made it a powerful country under his guidance. Nowhere in the whole peninsula was there any state or authority which could enforce law and order. At the beginning of the sixth century the Kindites (descendants of Qaḥṭan through Ya'rab) had attempted to form a kingdom in central Arabia, but they soon fell a prey to the general disorder in the country and about the time of the Prophet's birth (571 A. C.), anarchy reigned amongst the nomad tribes of Al-Ḥijáz and Nejd.

In the rest of the country, the Arabs had not even the semblance of power left to them. The Jews who had been driven out of Palestine by the Christians had built forts from the frontiers of Palestine to Khaibar and were the richest, most powerful and influential people in the land between Medīna and Palestine but they were not organised under any one ruler, and judging by later events, one cannot say that they were at all capable of doing any good to themselves or to their adopted country. The best-known colonies of these Jews were the Banī-Nazīr, the Banī-Kuraiza and the Banī-Qainuqa'.

In the rest of Arabia, the antagonism which at that time existed between Byzantium and Ctesiphon kept Arabia in a state of perpetual warfare and disorder. The Ghassánids in Haurán were under Greek (or Roman) suzerainty whilst the Lakhmids in Hirá and Anbar were under the Persian empire.

In the south, the Abyssinians had overthrown the Himyarites (the remnants of the ancient Sabeans) in about 571 A. C. but they were themselves overthrown by a native prince acting under the influence of the Persian Emperor and his agents.

Politically, therefore, Arabia in the sixth century was in the worst possible state that could be imagined. Having no ruler or king of its own, it was torn into pieces by the rivalries of its own unruly tribes and by the intrigues and rivalries of its neighbouring foreign states and by the greed and rapacity of its Jewish colonists.

II. THE RELIGION OF THE PRE-ISLAMIC ARABS

THE life of the pre-Islamic Arabs, especially in Ḥijáz depended on trade and they made a trade of their religion as well. Taking advantage of the House built by Abraham and Ishmael at Mecca, or Becca as it was called in ancient times, they made it a house of the deities of all the Arabs so that people might come and worship their deities and bring them trade and money. About four hundred years before the birth of Muḥammad one 'Amr bin Lahya bin Hárath bin 'Amr ul-Qais bin Tha'laba bin Azd bin Khalan bin Babalyun bin Saba, a descendant of Qaḥṭan and king of Ḥijáz, had put an idol called *Hobal*

on the roof of the Ka'ba. This was one of the chief deities of the Quraish before Islám. It is said that there were altogether three hundred and sixty idols in and about the Ka'ba and that each tribe had its own deity.

Not only had they idols and deities in the Ka'ba but they had them also in other cities, some of which imitated the sanctity of Mecca. If a person failed to go to Mecca he put up a stone or an image in his own town and made the circuit round it.

The shapes and figures of the idols were also made according to the fancy of the worshippers. Thus *Wadd* was shaped like a man, *Naila* like a woman, so was *Suwa'*. *Yaghūth* was made in the shape of a lion, *Ya'ūq* like a horse and *Nasr* like a vulture.

The tribe called Kalb worshipped *Wadd*; Huzail worshipped *Suwa'*; the people of Yemen worshipped *Nasr*; Hamdán, *Ya'ūq*; Bani-Thaqīf of Ṭáif *Lát*; Bani Kanána *'Uzza*; Aus and Khazraj *Manát*; and so on and so forth.

Besides *Hobal*, there was another idol called *Shams* placed on the roof of the Ka'ba.

There were also pictures of Abraham, Ishmael, Jesus and Mary placed inside the Ka'ba.

The blood of the sacrificial animals brought by the pilgrims was offered to the deities in the Ka'ba and sometimes even human beings were sacrificed and offered to the gods.

The tribe of Ghaṭfan had an imitation Ka'ba made which they called Laith. Pilgrims went there also. Similarly Bani-Khasham had a place called Zul-Khalsa.

Near the hill called Uḥd there was a place of worship called Sa'īda. The tribe Rabia' had a place of worship called Zul-Ka'bat. Najrán had a domed house called the Ka'ba of the Najrán.

In fact, there were as many deities as there were priests who wanted to make money out of their deities. Of true religion or true religious worship there was nothing at all. They believed neither in a day of judgment nor in rewards or punishments, or a life hereafter.

Besides idol-worship, they also worshipped the stars, the sun and the moon. It is difficult to say how star-worship was introduced into Arabia or by whom. But astrology and astronomy are the oldest of human acquisitions and there are people even to-day who believe that the stars and other heavenly bodies have an influence over human affairs; and ignorant people are always ready to worship anything that they regard as a guardian of mankind or any thing that may do good or harm to them according to their theories.

Mention of idol-worship in the Qur-án

IDOL-WORSHIP is so old and so persistent that even Noah found it impossible to uproot it and his cry to God is:

> Noah said: "My Lord! surely they have disobeyed me and followed one whose wealth and children increase him in nothing but loss.
>
> And they have planned a great plan.
>
> And they say: "Forsake not your deities and forsake neither Wadd nor Swa'; neither Yaghūth, nor Ya'ūq, nor Nasr.

(Qur-án, 71 : 21 to 23.)

Abraham bewailed the same thing when he said:

> And (remember) when Abraham said: "My Lord!
> Make this town peaceful and save me and my children from worshipping idols.
> My Lord, surely they have caused a large number of men to be lost... (Qur-án, 14: 35-36.)

With reference to the three special deities of the Meccans, says God:

> Have you then considered al-Lát and al-'Uzza
> And Manát, the third, the last?
> Are there males for you and for Him females?
> A most unfair division that!
> They are nothing but names which you have given them, you and your forefathers;
> No authority has God sent down for them,
> They (the unbelievers) follow nothing but a guess and what their souls desire... (Qur-án, 53: 19-23.)

The Meccans also believed in the Supreme Being Alláh but they fancied that He could not be approached except through some minor deity or through the angels whom they called "the daughters of Alláh".

> And those who take protectors besides Him (say):
> "We worship not these but in order that they may bring us nearer to God in position..." (Qur-án, 39: 3.)

But "Devotion," says God, "is exclusively due to him." (Qur-án, 39: 3.)

It is this joining gods with God that is called *Shirk* in the Qur-án, and which is the unpardonable sin of mankind and in which the Quraish were engrossed at the time of Muḥammad's birth so much so that their very livelihood depended upon this worship. It has

been so in all countries and in all ages. The guardians of temples and the priests thereof are the spiritual robbers of mankind.

III. THE MORAL DEGRADATION OF THE PRE-ISLAMIC ARABS

(1) *The Status of Women*

(*a*) *The Killing of Daughters.*—Amongst Bani-Tamīm and the Quraish, daughters were regarded as a nuisance and some fathers prided themselves on their feats of murdering their daughters.

When a daughter grew up to the age of five or six, the father dug a deep pit in the desert, took his daughter to the pit, pushed her into it and in spite of her cries buried her alive.

A man called Qais bin Áṣim buried ten daughters of his in this way. All the Arabs were not equally addicted to this cruelty but very few tribes were free from this atrocious custom. Some killed their children for fear of poverty as stated in the Qur-án :

> And kill ye not your children for fear of poverty.
> We provide them with livelihood and you also;
> Surely killing them is a heinous sin. (Qur-án, 17 : 31.)

(*b*) *The Marrying of Widows.*—When a person died and left a widow or widows, the nearest male relation had to cover her or them with his mantle and they became his wives.

Even a son, in this way, took his step-mother as his wife. This most heinous custom was abolished by the Qur-án :

> And marry not those women whom your fathers have married,

But what is past (is past)
Surely (such marrying) is an indecency and a heinous affair;
And an evil way. (Qur-án, 4 : 22.)

All this was possible because there was no authority to enforce any laws in Arabia except tribal customs and because women were regarded as mere chattels.

(c) *Fornication and Adultery.*—The relations amongst men and women in pre-Islamic days were such as were not and could not be controlled by any laws. The women were as lawless as the men and that may have provided some excuse to fathers who killed their own daughters. Women put on their best ornaments and clothes and went out singly, in twos, and in parties, to the outskirts of the desert to satisfy their desires. There they met young men. Neither the men nor the women were ashamed to indulge in the most lustful deeds and the most indecent talk by means of which the males enjoyed themselves and the females satisfied their desires. Fornication was not considered a crime or a sin.

In the battle of Uḥd, Hind, the wife of Abu-Ṣufyán son of Harb son of Umayya, excited the passions of the Quraish warriors against Muḥammad by the following song:—

If you advance, we will embrace you and we will prepare for you beds of sexual intercourse;
But if you go back we will leave you the leaving without a joy.

Some women, when they gave birth to a child and did not know, or could not say, who the father was, were not ashamed to assign the child to the man who most resembled it.

(*d*) *Polygamy and Divorce.*—There were no laws regulating marriage and divorce. A man married as many wives as he liked and divorced as he wished. A man had to say to his wife, "Thou art to me as the back of my mother" and she was divorced but could not marry another. So great was the force of this unjust custom that in the early days of the Prophet's mission even he did not know how to deal with it till God abolished it. The matter is explained in Chapter 58 of the Qur-án.

(2) *Gambling and Drunkenness*

DRUNKENNESS, gambling and fornication went hand-in-hand and those who were not addicted to these vices could be counted on one's fingers. Those who were not so addicted were considered mean, stingy and unsociable. "And when I die marry not one who is humble, weak or who does not gamble, and avoids his people." This is the will left by a pre-Islámic poet to his widow.

There were hundreds of names for wines and every corner of a street had its prominent wine shop. Trade and wine-selling had become synonyms.

It seems that those Arabs who became Christians were the main cause of the introduction of Syrian wines into Arabia. Drinking is an essential part of the lives of

Christian nations; and America has been forced back to wine drinking after having vainly tried to go "dry" for ten years.

Banī-Taghlab were a Christian people and their chief poet (addressing a female) says:

Heigh-ho! get-up with thy cup of wine,
And give me the morning drink,
And leave not a single wine of the wines of Indrina*:
Wines which when mixed with hot water smell like roses.

Parties of drunkards met at one another's house; camels were slaughtered; dancing and singing girls were invited and when all became thoroughly drunk they indulged in sexual intercourse to their heart's content.

A poet of their own time thus describes the beauty and the pleasure of these parties:

The companions of my drinks
Are bright like the stars;
And as the evening comes,
So does the singing girl
Robed in saffron Southern clothes;
Her chest is open wide,
Embraced by many braves;
And when we say to her
"Do sing";
With a slow and rhythmic motion,
She advances to our feet,
And with the help of drinking wines
And with my pleasures deep
And with my spending of the wealth

---

* Indrina was a town in Syria.

Do I pass the life I lead.
And were it not for pleasures three
Which delight a noble youth,
I swear by thee I'd gladly die.

And the poet goes on to explain in several more couplets what those pleasures were:

The first was to disregard the advice of wise people and to indulge in drinking red and black wines which bubble up when mixed with hot water.

The second was to have a dark cloudy day,—and what a lovely day that would be!—and be engaged with a female beauty in a tent so that the day's duration was cut short and time passed quickly.

The third was to slaughter a fat she-camel pregnant with a young one and to have the young one roasted with the fatty hump of her mother and being served by young maids.

And it did not matter to these revellers whether the camel was their own or belonged to some one else. The more helpless the owner the more pleasant for them.

Stories of drunken orgies are so numerous that a book might easily be compiled to contain all these. This state of affairs lasted till drinking and gambling were entirely forbidden by the Qur-án.

Gambling was practised by means of arrows. As the greater part of the wealth of the Arabs consisted of camels, the stakes were also camels. Camels were slaughtered and the flesh divided into ten parts.

Lots were then drawn by means of ten arrows mixed together and placed in the hands of a third party. The

arrows were either marked with one, two or three notches or were unmarked. Those who drew the blank arrows got nothing, those who drew the marked arrows got as many portions of the flesh as were the marks on the arrows.

The flesh was then given to the winners according to their shares and distributed by them to the poor and the needy or to their friends. Those who did not gamble were considered mean and uncharitable.

(3) *Usury*

THE Arabs were also given to lending money on heavy rates of interest, and when the money lent was not paid at the stipulated time, interest was added to the capital and further interest charged on the whole as is done by money-lenders all over the world. But the Arab usurers sometimes not only added interest to the capital but increased the latter also. If the loans were not paid the creditor sometimes took possession of the borrower's wife and children, or sometimes the wife and children themselves became the subject of a mortgage.

(4) *Tribal Wars*

THE pre-Islamic Arabs were ferocious warriors. It did not matter what the cause was. Every tribe had its feuds and unless a tribe or an individual who considered himself wronged had its or his revenge there was no peace. But then the other side considered itself wronged, and so the feuds went on.

For forty or fifty years before Islám there had been

about one hundred and thirty-two battles called Ayyám ul-'Arab (*lit.* the days of Arabs).

One of these feuds arose amongst the tribes of 'Abbás and Zabyan in this way.—They each had a famous horse respectively called Dahas and Ghabra. A race was run and one side was guilty of some infringement of the rules of racing. This led to a feud which lasted for forty years.

Another feud is called " The War of Basūs". Basūs was a woman who had a she-camel. This camel by accident trespassed into the pasturing ground of another tribe. The camel was wounded. The tribes (Bakar and Taghlab) got inflamed and had a bloody war. Aus and Khazraj, two tribes of Medīna, were engaged in a most bloody war in which they lost a good many of their chief men. This war was terminated by the Prophet when he emigrated to Medīna.

The evil of these fights was not the mere destruction of the lives and wealth of the people. When one tribe conquered another, they took possession of the females of the conquered and committed acts of indecency either in the open field or wherever they pleased. When peace was made and these women were returned they were taken back as a matter of course.

(5) *Cruelty and Plunder*

THE Arabs of pre-Islamic days, semi-barbarous as they were, cut off live flesh from the backs of camels and the tails of fat sheep which they roasted and enjoyed eating. They were given to mutilating their captives (both men and women).

Women were sometimes tied to the tails of horses which were then made to gallop so that the poor victims were crushed to death. This was the pastime of the nobles.

Sometimes a man was locked up in a cabin till he died of hunger and thirst.

Camels were, similarly, tied at the tombs of deceased persons till they died for lack of food.

(6) *Belief in Ghosts, Devils and Evil Spirits*

In common with all pagans and semi-civilised or semi-barbarous peoples, the pre-Islamic Arabs believed in all kinds of invisible beings collectively called *jin* (something hidden and invisible).

Those *jins* that were supposed to live in jungles and deserts and ruins and misled people were called *ghoul*. They were supposed to be both male and female. It is difficult to say whether all the supposed *jins* were really considered to be invisible, or whether some of them were really not invisible but men living in the desert whom these Arabs called *jin*. It is said that these *jins* mixed with the Beduins of the desert and when the latter lighted fires in the desert in winter the *jins* came and warmed themselves at these fires but refused to join in eating. They had various names. Those who lived with men were called *'Amar*; those that annoyed children were called *Rūḥ*. Those who were wicked were called *Shaiṭán*. Those who were still more wicked were called *'Ifrīt*. A man called Khurafa is said to have been carried away by them and on his return after a long time he is reported to have spoken strange things.

All this kidnapping and other stories about the *jins* joining Beduins in warming themselves before the fires would show that the *jins*, or at least some of them, were wild men of the desert who spoke some aboriginal language which the Arabs did not understand.

(7) *Soothsayers and Fortune-tellers*

THERE was no lack of wizards, soothsayers and fortune-tellers in Arabia. But in this the Arabs were not alone. Even now the world is not rid of these social pests. Each soothsayer was supposed to be possessed by some *jin* who gave him information about the past or the future. They accused the Prophet also of being a *kåhin* or one possessed. But God cleared him of these accusations. When ignorant people are incapable of understanding something which is beyond their ken they explain it by something known to them howsoever absurd the explanation may be. And the disbelieving Arabs called Muḥammad a poet, a mad man, or a sorcerer. To them he possessed supernatural powers which, according to their knowledge, could only be explained by such names as mentioned above.

The *Kåhins* or fortune-tellers lived in temples and were both men and women. When they were asked about the future, they excited themselves into a state of hysteria and predicted the future. They received valuable presents. Some of them who afterwards became Muslims acknowledged their fraudulent practices.

Even poets were considered to be possessed and on this theory when once the Prophet was unwell for two or

three days and did not go to say his prayers in the Ka'ba, the wife of Abū Lahab came and said to him:

"I hope that thy devil has left thee."

She was a poor unfortunate woman who was engrossed in her superstition. How could she understand the higher spiritual elevation of Muḥammad?

One poet boasts of his own devil:

> I and every poet of men,
> Each has his devil
> But whilst others have females,
> Mine is a male.

(8) *Poets and Poetry*

THE pre-Islamic Arabs were not a literary race. Very few of them could read or write. In fact, the art of writing was still in its infancy. The written documents or engravings that are still preserved are of the most primitive type. In spite of this, the majority of the Arabs—men, women and children—were steeped in poetry. The language lent itself to poetic forms and it had been cultivated as no other language had ever been cultivated before. The Arabs were Arabs (*i.e.*, those who speak fluently and intelligently). The rest of the world, according to them, were 'Ajamī (deaf and dumb, the very opposite of fluent and intelligent).

But their poetry consisted mostly of personal or tribal boasting; of the love of women and wine; of their fondness for gambling and drunkenness.

It was also the handmaid of warriors for exciting their passions and a poet was considered to be the equal of a hundred soldiers.

Odes and poems were recited on the occasion of the pilgrimage and the best ones were said to be hung in the Ka'ba. *Sab'a-Mu'allaqát* which are still extant were such seven selected poems. But it is possible that the word *Mu'allaqát* may only mean "Selected and pearled together" and not literally "hung up". If so, they would mean the seven classical poems. These poems are still studied by all Arabic scholars. They are the most difficult pieces of Arabic literature to understand on account of the numerous allusions to Arabic customs, names and peculiarities of the life of the Arabs.

Allied to poetry was the art of love-making. And both individuals and tribes boasted of their superiority in this art. The more obscene and vulgar their exploits the greater was their boasting. To them it was the life-blood of their chivalry.

Imra ul-Qais was the Shakespeare of the Arabs. In addition, he was a prince and a ruler. He committed the most unmentionable indecencies with his own cousin (his father's sister's daughter) and other women. These indecencies have been the subject of a most famous poem composed by him called *Qasīda-Lamia.* In spite of these indecencies the ode was on everybody's tongue both old and young.

These poets are thus referred to in the Qur-án:

> And as to the poets, the deviators follow them.
> Dost thou not see them wandering in every valley?
> And that they say what they do not do?
>
> (Qur-án, 26 : 224 to 226.)

Pre-Islamic poetry, instead of elevating the human soul, degraded it to its lowest depths. But its eloquence

cannot be denied. It represented the Arab character to perfection.

IV. VIRTUES OF THE ARABS

No people, howsoever wild or barbarous, can exist for long without some virtues. The Arabs were wild but not sophisticated as the Jews were, whom Jesus came to reform.

(*a*) *Frankness*

THE quotations from Arabic poetry, already given, prove that though the Arabs boasted of their vices they did not hide their sins under the cloak of religious hypocrisy as did the Jews at Khaibar. And in their wars with Muḥammad, which will be described later on, the Arabs did their best to kill Muḥammad and his companions and to turn them back to the old ways of worship but they never poisoned him or his companions as did a Jewish lady at Khaibar. The disbelieving Arabs were bitter in their hatred of Muḥammad but they were open enemies and in their heart of hearts they believed Muḥammad to be a perfectly honest and noble man. Their opposition to him was based on the fact that Muḥammad's preaching was certain to ruin their livelihood. They did not and could not foresee that he was come to unite and to make them a prosperous nation. When in the end they did see that, their support of Muḥammad was as great as their previous antagonism.

(*b*) *Love of Independence*

THE Arabs were as a whole a free people. They were free-booters but still they had not been tainted

with the servility which is inseparable from foreign yoke. There may have been political intrigues due to the influence of the rival empires of Persia and Byzantium but the people as a whole were not subjugated to any ruler. The very fact that each tribe and each family had to fight for its existence made them love liberty. In fact, the love of liberty had become the love of unruliness, but still it was there. It was not easy for any ambitious ruler to make them the slaves of his wishes.

(c) *Bravery and Hunting*

THE greatest insult that could be given to an Arab was to insinuate that he was a coward. The Arabs had no fear. They loved adventures involving danger. Not only men but women were brave to the extreme. They accompanied their males to the battlefield knowing full well the danger they exposed themselves to. Trade and hunting were almost the only lawful occupations they had. And there is no better training than hunting for the cultivation of bravery. To kill or to be killed is the underlying principle of hunting and the practice of this occupation stood the Arabs in great stead. Under such a rigorous method of living, only the fittest could survive. The weak and the cowardly had no chance of success in life.

(d) *Hospitality and Generosity*

THE hospitality of the Arabs is renowned all over the world and is inherited from Abraham. The guest was

honoured by the Arabs as if he was the sent one of God. They would slaughter a camel or a sheep for him. They would protect him from all harm at the cost of their own lives as long as he was within their protection. The rich would make themselves poor by slaughtering their camels and distributing the flesh thereof to their friends and the poor. This generosity went so far in the time of Ignorance that even the chastity of women was considered second to the pleasures of the guest. Story books are full of anecdotes of Arabic generosity and Arabic hospitality. There may be exaggeration in the majority of these stories but that they are based on facts is not denied by anyone.

(*e*) *Memory and Intelligence*

NEVER in the history of mankind has there ever been a race of men who cultivated their memory as did the Arabs. And memory we know is one of the greatest pillars of brain power. Every Arab knew his genealogy by heart for ten to twenty generations back. They all could recite poems. The classical poems were the inheritance of the whole people. So great was their power of memorising and recollection that men like 'Ali, Abū Bakr and 'Umar had merely to listen to long verses of the Qur-án to remember them. And once learnt they never forgot them. Even to-day there are Arabs who not only know the Qur-án by heart but also thousands of traditions of the Prophet with the names of all the reporters in correct order. To this they add all the famous poems, all the proverbs and witty sayings of their forefathers.

The Arabs were prodigies of intellect and it did not take them long, after Islám, to master all the sciences of the Greeks, Indians and Romans, and to add to them. In Algebra, in Astronomy, in Philosophy, in Grammar, in Poetry, in History, in Chemistry, in Navigation, in Eloquence and in all the arts the world is indebted to their labours and without this Arab Intelligence there could have been no modern Civilization.

V. RELIGIOUS AND MORAL CONDITION OF PEOPLES OTHER THAN ARABS

(*a*) *Jews*

THE Jews under Moses were God's favoured people but they annoyed Moses as long as he lived. They rose to great eminence under David and Solomon but when Jesus appeared amongst them they were entirely subject to the Romans. This was not their only misfortune, they had become hard-hearted, formal and sophisticated. They loved controversy and dispute, the breaking of all the laws whilst pretending to keep their form. More than half of the historical portions of the Qur-án relate to the doings or misdoings of the Jews. They were told not to fish on the Sabbath day, but to get out of this difficulty they erected dams and locks in their rivers and when fish came there on the Sabbath day they closed these locks and captured the fish afterwards. They were forbidden to practise usury but they could not live without it; and so they broke all the laws. Jesus came to reform them but they persecuted him. Every reformer that was sent to them was persecuted or killed,

and Muḥammad met with no better fate. He was persecuted by them and poisoned by one of their females, the effects of which remained. The Prophet is stated to have said that his last fatal illness was due to this poison. Greedy, selfish, quarrelsome and revengeful—these were the traits that distinguished the Jews. It is a thousand pities that a race who had the largest number of prophets amongst their forefathers should have degenerated to such an extent.

Before the time of Muḥammad's birth the Jews had been expelled from the Holy Land by the Christians and had settled in Northern Arabia but their treachery was destined to drive them away from Arabia as well.

The wrong-doings of the Jews towards their own prophets, towards Christians in the days of Christ, towards Muḥammad and his followers in Arabia, make a painful reading and enough of it will be related in the pages of this book in due course.

(b) *Christians*

If the condition of the Jews in the sixth century of the Christian era was bad, that of the Christians was worse.

Jesus was one of the five major prophets mentioned in the Qur-án, *viz.*:

Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad.

Jesus, as is apparent by his teachings, had come to confirm the Law and the Torah and it was his mission to expound the reality underlying the principles of the Old

Testament as against the formalism and ritualism of the Jews.

But Paul, who followed him, was not content with this simple truth. He was for converting the Greeks and other heathens. He incorporated the mythology of the Greeks into the spiritualism of Christ, and Christianity henceforth became tainted with heathenism. The doctrine of trinity belonged to Greek or Egyptian mythology but Paul introduced it into Christianity and since then the Christians have never been able to get rid of the curse of worshipping deities of their own making.

> And the Jews say: "Azra is the son of God,"
> Whilst the Christians say: "The Messiah is the son of God."
> These are their sayings with their mouths;
> They copy the saying of those who disbelieved before (them).
> God's displeasure be upon them!
> How do they turn away?
> They have adopted their learned men and their monks as lords besides God,
> And (also) the Messiah son of Mary.
> And they were ordered to worship none but one God;
> There is no deity but He.
> Gloried be He, away from what they join.
>
> (Qur-án, 9 : 30-31.)

Eastern Roman Empire

ABOUT 325 A. C. (After Christ) the Roman Empire was divided into two; and Constantine, the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, adopted Christianity as his state

religion. This made the Christians worse than ever before. They began to fight amongst themselves on doctrines of their inventions and from that day to this there is no stoppage of the foundation of new sects amongst them. In Arabia, the Christians worshipped Mary as one of the members of the holy trinity—the others being Jesus and God. Jesus taught the service of God and the brotherhood of mankind. But each Christian sect has its own definition of Godhead and its own views on the Brotherhood of mankind. No two of them can agree together and at the time of Muḥammad's birth they had nothing left of the spirit of Christianity except amongst some solitary holy divines and God-loving people as there must always be some amongst each people:

> They are not all on a level:
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 112.)
>
> And of those who call themselves Christians
> We (also) took their covenant,
> They also forget a portion of what they were reminded of,
> Wherefore We feed them with enmity and hatred amongst themselves to the day of the Awakening....
>
> (Qur-án, 5 : 14.)

It is really most shameful that the followers of the Prince of Peace should be at each other's throats. As these lines are being written (3rd January 1936), Reuter is wiring all over the world that the Italians have destroyed the Swedish Red Cross Hospital in Abyssinia. Italy has been declared the Aggressor and yet goes on piling up aggression upon aggression in the face of the

whole world—Christians and non-Christians put together. This was the spirit of the Christianity of the Eastern Roman Empire. This was also the spirit of the Christianity of the Roman Catholics in Spain after the Muslims had been brutally murdered there in the fifteenth century. But whoever, be he nominally a Muslim, a Christian or a Jew, is cruel towards mankind is God's enemy :

> For this reason have We prescribed for the children of Israel
> That he who kills a person without the latter being guilty of killing of another
> Or of doing evil in the land,
> Then his action is such as if he had killed all mankind.
> And he who saves one life is
> As if he had saved all mankind... (Qur-án, 5 : 32.)

But with the Christians of the sixth century killing of their opponents was a pleasure. The Emperor Julian is reported to have said :

" No wild beasts are so hostile to men as Christian sects in general are to one another." *

" The condition of Constantinople† under Justinian, the Christian and glorified legislator, is the best index to the demoralised and degraded state of society all over Christendom. Public or private virtue had no recognition in the social conceptions ; a harlot sat on the throne of the Cæsars, and shared with the Emperor the honours of state. Theodora had publicly plied her trade in the city of

* See Syed Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam*, Introduction, pp. xliv-lv.

† *Ibid*, p. liii.

Constantine, and her name was a byword amongst its dissolute inhabitants. And now she was adored as a queen in the same city by 'grave magistrates, orthodox bishops, victorious generals and captive monarchs'. The empire was disgraced by her cruelties, which recognised no religious or moral restraint. Seditions, outbreaks, and sanguinary tumults, in which the priesthood always took the most prominent part, were the order of the day. On these occasions, every law, human or divine, was trampled under foot; churches and altars were polluted by atrocious murders; no place was safe or sacred from depredations; the bonds of society were rent asunder, and revolting outrages were perpetrated in broad daylight.................

"Humanity revolts from the accounts of crime which sully the annals of Christian Constantinople. Whilst the Prophet of Islám was yet an infant, one of the most virtuous emperors who ever ascended the throne of Byzantium was massacred, with his children and wife, with fearful tortures at the instance of a Christian monarch. The emperor was dragged from his sanctuary, and his five sons were successively murdered under his eyes; and this tragic scene closed with the execution of the emperor himself. The empress and her daughters were subjected to nameless cruelties and then beheaded on the very ground which had been stained with the blood of poor Emperor Maurice. The ruthless treatment meted out to the friends, companions and partisans of the imperial victim, serves as an index to the morality of the Byzantine Christians. Their eyes were pierced, their

tongues were torn from the root, their hands and feet were amputated; some expired under the lash, others in flames, others again were transfixed with arrows."

> And if God were to seize mankind on account of their wrongdoing,
> Not a living thing would He leave thereupon (*i.e.*, on the earth),
> But He postpones them to a fixed term...
>
> (Qur-án, 16 : 61.)

But when the time of God's punishment comes (whether it be here or hereafter) no one can put it back. Mankind do not realize that in spite of the liberty given to them the kingdom of the heavens and the earths is in the hands of God.

> Evil has appeared on land and sea for what the hands of mankind have earned
> That He may cause them to taste some of what they have done in order that they may return.
>
> (Qur-án, 30 : 41.)

(*c*) *The Persians*

WERE the Persians any better than the Christians. Yes and no. Yes, because the Persians were not so cruel as the Christians, and no, because they were equally depraved.

The nominal faith of Persia was Zoroastrianism which laid down that all the good in the world was due to Ormuzd and all the evil to Ahriman but Ormuzd always succeeded. They worshipped Ormuzd. The Persians were, however, a fighting race and when they subjugated alien races their faith became corrupt. Old Magism, or

the worship of the elements of nature, was revived and Zoroastrianism was mixed with old Sabaeism of the Medes and Chaldeans.

The Persian of the sixth century recognised no law of marriage or divorce except his own will. He could marry his nearest kindred and do as he pleased.

"The worship of true God* had given place to a Chaldeo-Magian cult and the fierce intolerance with which Ardeshir and his successors persecuted rival creeds, failed to achieve its purpose.

"The Persian empire, under the later Sasanides, only rivalled in the turmoil of its sects and the licentiousness of its sovereigns, in the degeneration of its aristocracy and the overweening pride of its priesthood, the empire of the Byzantines. The kings were gods; they were absolute masters over the person and property of their subjects, who possessed no rights, and were virtual serfs..............

"All these evils betokened a complete depravity of moral life, and foreshadowed the speedy extinction of the nation in its own iniquities. This doom, though staved off for a time by the personal character of Kesra Anushirwan, became inevitable after his death. But a Master had already appeared destined to change the whole aspect of the World."

(*d*) *Indians and Chinese*

BUT what about India and China? These lands are the guardians of ancient philosophy and ancient literature. Were they morally any better than the Christians of Europe and the Mago-Zoroastrians of Persia?

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* See Syed Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam*, Introduction, p. xxvi.

India has no authoritative history of the land before the Muslims conquered it. There can be no doubt, however, that India had philosophers and learned men long before the world knew anything about philosophy and learning.

The Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita are the immortal productions of Indian learning. Though there is much inter-mixture of ideas in these two works, they are also full of passages which are the nearest approach to monotheism in any ancient religion.

But later Hinduism has degenerated this high conception of godhead into a degraded form of pantheism against which the Árya and the Brahmo Samájists are rebelling.

The introduction and perversion of caste-system has also reduced Hinduism to the level of human worship. Idol-worship has now thrived in India for thousands of years and Buddhism which once tried to free men from the worship of all gods has itself fallen a victim to idol-worship.

However grand the theories and ideas of Hindu philosophers about God and religion may be, religion in actual practice amongst the Hindus is and has been for many centuries nothing but the "worship of priests, the manes and, for form's sake, the Vedic gods ". Trees, stones and other natural objects were and are the subjects of popular adoration. Female infanticide was not uncommon and the burning alive of the widows with their husbands' corpses was considered an act of merit.

All this was due to the fact that women were considered as the property of the males and as having no rights of their own.

A woman was not allowed to study the Vedas or to take part in the ablutions of the manes, or in the sacrifices to the gods.

" Women, says Manu, have impure appetites, they show weak flexibility and bad conduct. Day and night must they be kept in subjection.

"As regards the Sudras, he declared, almost in the words of the Pandeets, that the Creator had made them slaves and that a man belonging to that caste, even when he is emancipated by his master, cannot be free; for bondage being natural to him, who can deliver him from it.

" Such in brief was the religious and social condition among the people of one of the most gifted sections of the Aryan race at the time when the Prophet of Islam brought his Message to the world."*

It is not necessary to go deeply into the history of the moral and religious status of the Chinese. That gifted nation has always been a practical people. They have been worshipping the souls of their forefathers for generations; and religious theories which afflict the Arab, the Jew, the Christian and the Hindu are no concern of theirs. They have always been a race of hard-working peasants, pedants, robbers, great legislators and artisans. Slavery, concubinage and gambling have been in their blood and no one has been able to free them from these national vices.

Love of God, belief in Heaven or Hell or in God's Messengers was unknown to the Chinese. They were materialists pure and simple.

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* *Spirit of Islam*, p. xxix.

CHAPTER IV

DARKNESS AND DAWN

1. THE BIRTH OF MUHAMMAD

THE dark, dismal, dreary night of spiritual gloom and moral turpitude was spread all over the world. Africa was still inhabited by wild beasts and naked humanity. Europe was sunk in barbarism, and murder was committed under the name of Christianity. Instead of "Love thy enemy," the cry was "kill thy brother". Satan, instead of Jesus, had taken possession of the hearts of men. The hatred of sect against sect in Christendom had become so violent that even beasts were more human than humanity. Manhood was debased, womanhood was debased, religion was debased. The temple of spiritual virtue founded by Jesus had become the den of inhuman fanaticism. All the glory of Greece, all the greatness of Rome, was gone. From London to Constantinople, from Spain to Russia, there was not a single ray of the light of beauty, virtue or justice. The heart of man was filled with infidelity. And the people, like uncared for sheep, were the prey of the immoral wolves of humanity. The ten commandments of Moses had been substituted by the ten opposite commandments of human devils.

The Arabs had forgotten the religion of their forefathers—Noah and Abraham—and were on the verge of

extinction on account of their immorality, their extravagance and their tribal feuds.

> And you were on the brink of the pit of fire,
> Then He rescued you therefrom...
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 102.)

The Persians, also, had forgotten the true faith and were fallen into the fire which had killed their souls. They married their own sisters and iniquity was rampant over the land. India was engrossed in the worship of innumerable deities and in making slaves of Sudras and gods of Brahmans. China knew not God and was content to die in the pit of materialism.

Who could rescue mankind from this impending death ?

The voice of God was heard to say :

> Say : "O My servants ! those (of you) who have been immoderate against their own souls, despair not of God's mercy..."
>
> (Qur-án, 39 : 53.)

"I will send you my chosen one (*al-Muṣṭafa*), the praised one (Muḥammad), the harbinger of mercy to all mankind (*Raḥmatul-lil-'Álamīn*), the shining spiritual sun (*sirájan-munīra*), gifted with immense goodness (*al-Kauthar*), loving and merciful (*raūfun-raḥīm*), My beloved one (*al-Murtaḍa*), My friend (*al-Khalīl*) and one endowed with superb manners (*la 'ala khuliqin 'azīm*)."

And here he came, Muḥammad, the son of 'Abdullah and Ámina. The sun had not yet risen but the glorious sun of spiritual light had dawned on the world on

Monday, 22nd April, 571 years after Christ, the 9th day of Rabi' ul-Awwal of the first year of the Elephant.

Let all mankind bow down to God in thankfulness for His mercy. The Redeemer has come. He will teach mankind the Book and the Wisdom, and will purify their souls. All mankind, whether they believe in him or not, will benefit by his virtues and by his example. A few who are already doomed will meet their end but all the rest will benefit. Directly or indirectly, all mankind will be indebted to him for ever. He will confirm all the Heavenly Books and all the Prophets. From East to West, North to South, the earth shall resound five times a day with the cry of "God is Great, God is Great, God is Great, God is Great," and no man shall have any excuse for not knowing the Goodness of God and His Mercy.

The foundations of the palaces and empires of Kisrás and Cæsars are this day shaken and their fall is imminent, for they are built not on justice, beauty and goodness but on cruelty, iniquity and barbarism. The prayers and prophecies of Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus have now been fulfilled. Muḥammad is come to put the copestone on the Divine Palace erected by these Prophets of God. His is the responsibility and his the privilege of completing their glorious work. He is the General who directs his forces and fights for them with his Wisdom. He safeguards all the Books and confirms all the Prophets. He is blessed by all good men because he is blessed by God and His angels.

Surely God and His messenger-spirits send blessings upon the Prophet.
O ye who believe! send ye blessings upon him and wish him peace with a hearty wishing.

(Qur-án, 33 : 56.)

And with all that, he is not going to claim to be a god but merely a man inspired who will direct men to God and be their leader. The Right Path shall be made clear for all humanity to see, so that he who has eyes may see but he who is blind of soul will have none to complain except his own unfortunate self. This effulgent Sun of Righteousness will not set till man exists on this planet. He will be buried but his soul will live for ever and be a guide to all truth-loving men and women.

The Glory of God and His Everlasting Praise will now be firmly established in the souls of Muḥammad's followers who will love God more than father, mother, brother, sister, kinsmen, wealth, children—nay more than their own selves.

Muḥammad is born an orphan, so that every orphan amongst his followers may be consoled by his example and so that no Muslim may be harsh to an orphan. The orphan is protected by God's special favour.

Then as to him who is an orphan oppress him not thou then. (Qur-án, 93 : 9.)

The patrimony which was left to this orphan is, five camels, a few sheep and one maid-servant.

His grandfather, 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, is one of the most influential men at Mecca but he has a very large family to support. However, he loves this orphan grandchild

of his and his grief over his son 'Abdullah (father of Muḥammad) is assuaged by the vision of the lovely face of one who is going to be the leader of mankind. He hastens to the house of his daughter-in-law and takes the young one in his arms and enters the Ka'ba and names him

Muḥammad.

This name was not common amongst the Arabs but it was not unknown.

2. THE CHILDHOOD OF MUHAMMAD

HISTORIANS differ as to the exact date and year of Muḥammad's birth. Another date is 20th August 570 A. C. but the majority are in favour of 9th to 12th Rubi' ul-Awwal of the first year of Elephant or 20th to 22nd April 571 A. C.

'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib prepares a feast

'ABD UL-MUTTALIB, after naming the orphan boy returned him to his mother and asked her to wait till the wet-nurses of Banī-Sa'd came to Mecca, so that the boy might be given in charge of one of them according to the custom of the noble families of Mecca. On the seventh day after the Prophet's birth, his grandfather ordered a feast to be prepared. The chief men amongst the Quraish were invited to the feast and when they had partaken of it, they asked 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib why he had named the boy "Muḥammad" and not according to the custom of his forefathers.—(The Quraish generally named their children after some deity, *e.g.*, 'Abd-Manáf, the slave or servant

of the deity called Manáf; 'Abdullah, the servant of God).

The grandfather's reply was: "I desire that he may be praised in the heavens for the sake of God and in the earth for the sake of His creatures."

There is thus, a pre-determined will running throughout the life of the Prophet. Coming events cast their shadows before and a prosperous plant has rich foliage. He starts his life with a most happy name and even before his birth, his mother Ámina had wonderful dreams about the greatness of the child that she was going to give birth to. It is also a strange coincidence that Muḥammad's father was named 'Abdullah or the servant of Alláh and not after any idol of the Arabs. His mother is also named Ámina, *i.e.*, a woman who is safe, protected or satisfied. The word is derived from the root *aman* meaning safety, security, faith, honesty or trustworthiness. It is the same root from which the words *Momin* (believer or one who is safe), *Amīn* (trustworthy), *Amánat* (loyalty or deposit) are derived.

Ámina waited for the coming of the wet-nurses of Bani-Sa'd so that she might hand over her child to one of them. Meanwhile, the baby was nursed by Thwaibia, a maid of Abu-Lahab, an uncle of the Prophet. She gave suck to him for some time after she had nursed Hamza, the youngest uncle of the Prophet. Thus Hamza and the Prophet were foster-brothers. This is another coincidence for no man in the whole of Arabia was braver than Hamza, and when, later on, Hamza became a convert to Islám he stood by the Prophet

like a "Lion of Islám". Thwaibia nursed the Prophet for a number of days only but he loved her most tenderly and used to visit her as long as she lived. In the seventh year after the Prophet's emigration to Medīna, he inquired about her from her son who was also his foster-brother as to her condition and her place of abode, but he was informed that she was already dead.

A week or two after the Prophet's birth, the wet-nurses of Banī-Sa'd came to Mecca searching for their charges according to custom. But they passed over the orphans, because they expected their rewards from the fathers of the children and the hope of getting a big largess from the mother of an orphan was poor. So that not one of them accepted Muḥammad.

One of these wet-nurses was named Ḥalīmah binte Abu-Zuaib of Banī-Sa'd. When first confronted with Muḥammad she also refused to accept him. But she was somewhat in poor circumstances and looking weak so that no mother would have her as a wet-nurse for her baby. Thus, there was no wet-nurse for Muḥammad and no baby to nurse for Ḥalīmah.

When the Banī-Sa'd gathered together to leave Mecca and go back to their homes, Ḥalīmah said to her husband Hárith: "I hate going back with my companions without a foster-child and by God I am going to get this orphan (meaning Muḥammad)." Her husband replied to her:

"Thou must do it, perhaps God will bless us with his presence." So Ḥalīmah took Muḥammad with her

to her desert home and she used to say that since she had him her sheep grew fat and increased in milk and God blessed her in all her belongings.

In this way, Muḥammad was nursed by Ḥalīmah (lit. a gentle woman) for two years and he was looked after by her daughter Shayyimah. The innervating air of the desert and the open exposed living there agreed with the natural strong and sturdy constitution of Muḥammad and he grew in health and strength and comeliness of form and beauty of shape. When the two years were over, Ḥalīmah took him back to his mother but so pleased were the two women with each other and so enamoured was Ḥalīmah of the child that she took him back to the desert for another two years. The boy remained another two years in the desert free from the physical and moral filth of a town-life of those days. There are stories in books that about this time two angels came in human form and that one of them (Gabriel) cut open Muḥammad's heart and removed therefrom the centre of evil and resewed it and made it whole by God's commandment. We need not take these stories too literally. The boy was unquestionably precocious and the Arabs, as has been noted in Chapter II of this book, were then a superstitious race believing in all kinds of invisible creatures.

On the other hand, it is possible that this story is founded on a too literal interpretation of the following verses of the Qur-án:—

> Have We not expanded for thee thy breast ?
> And We have taken off from thee thy weight,
> That which pressed heavily upon thy back,

And We have exalted for thee thy name (*lit.* rememb-rance).
Therefore surely ease (comes) with hardship,
Surely with hardship (comes) ease.
Therefore when thou art disengaged, then work hard (in prayer),
And so as to attend whole-heartedly towards thy Lord.

(Qur-án, Chapter 94.)

The meaning of the first verse given above is quite clear. God enlarged Muḥammad's mind to receive the Truth and made it easy for him to carry the burden of prophethood which at one time weighed heavily upon his mind. But Muḥammad struggled hard to qualify himself for the spiritual kingdom destined for him by means not only of fasting and praying but by means of doing good to his fellow beings even long before he received his mission. Thus his work which was impossible for another man was easy for him. His soul was so enlarged that it could receive and carry the burden of God's commandments with ease whilst another man would have broken down under the strain. He was the spiritual Hercules of the world.

Muḥammad remained for full five years in the desert with Ḥalīmah and her family. The influence of these early years on his body and mind cannot be exaggerated. Psychology now assures us that what a boy or a girl learns during these early years sinks down into the unconscious mind and comes out again and again making or marring a man's life throughout his whole career. Here again God's will is working in

directing Muḥammad's career. What did Muḥammad imbibe during these early years?

He built up first of all a most robust constitution which could withstand hunger and thirst and hard labour as few other men could. He had at times the strength of ten men. But besides that, he built up a spirit of independence and a determination which are unique in the whole history of mankind. Equally important with this physical and spiritual strength was the acquisition of the purest Arabic dialect. The Arabic of the towns was degraded compared with the Arabic of the desert. The influence of the Arabic language, as has already been explained in the preceding chapters, on the formation and development of character, is the most powerful of all factors governing life in Arabia. No one could have any voice with the Arabs who was not eloquent. Arabia at this time was governed not by the sword, nor by the pen, but by the tongue, and Muḥammad used to say to his companions:

"I am the most fluent (*lit.*, the best Arab) amongst you, because I am one of the Quraish and because I was fostered amongst Banī-Sa'd bin Bakr." Even in the conscious life of Muḥammad, these five years left a most lasting and beautiful effect. The man who loved Thwaibia so dearly because she had nursed him for a number of days was bound to love and honour Ḥalīmah and her family all his life. He never forgot any favours and he always repaid them many times over.

After the Prophet's marriage with Khadījah there was a year of famine and Ḥalīmah came to him. When

she went back, the Prophet gave her a camel loaded with goods and forty sheep. And every time she came to see him he would spread out his mantle for her to sit upon as a mark of honour to her.

After the siege of Ṭáif, Shayyimah, Ḥalīmah's daughter was one of the prisoners. When she was brought before Muḥammad and Muḥammad had recognised her, he honoured her and sent her back to her family according to her own wish.

Sometime in his sixth year of life, Muḥammad returned to his mother. It is said that Ḥalīmah searched for him whilst she was going to take him to his family but could not find him. So she came to 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and told him that Muḥammad had been lost. The grandfather sent people to search for him and Waraqa bin Naufal found him.

'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib took Muḥammad into his own custody and showered all his love on him and made him the chief object of his attention. He was then the chief of the Quraish and also the chief of the people of Mecca; and a *frash* or special seating accommodation was prepared and reserved for him at the Ka'ba. His sons used to sit round this *frash* as a mark of respect for their father. When Muḥammad was brought to him, he took him near his own seat, stroked his back and showed other signs of his favour. And so the love between the grandfather and the grandchild increased day by day and the trio of them—the grandfather, the mother and the grandson—were exceedingly happy.

But earthly happiness does not last long. Ámina

now longed to acquaint her first-born with his maternal uncles and aunts and she took him with Umm-i-Aiman (the servant maid left by 'Abdullah) to Medīna. She showed him the house where his father 'Abdullah had died and where he was buried and the boy now realized that he was an orphan. And the mother told him long stories about his loving father and how he had been buried at Medīna. The Prophet always remembered these stories of his first journey to Medīna and used to relate them to his companions—stories of his love for Medīna and his sorrow for his beloved father entombed there.

Death of Ámina

AFTER they had been one month at Medīna, Ámina made up her mind to return to Mecca and loaded her two camels which she had with her. When they were midway between Mecca and Medīna she fell sick and died and was buried there. Umm-i-Aiman was left with the lonely child. How happy was he two months ago at Mecca with his mother and grandfather! How fondly did he listen to his mother's stories about his father's love for her and about his own birth and childhood. And now here he was in the desert without father, mother, brother or sister. He had not seen his father. And now his mother also was buried in the desert before his very eyes with no one even to console his young heart. His loneliness and his state of being an orphan whilst away from home made a terribly deep impression on his young mind.

He had not yet completed the sixth year of his life but fate made him as sorrowful at six as many people are

at sixty. However, it was all for the good of humanity. The boy stricken with sorrow knew what it meant, to be an orphan and knew the value of consolation and help to the stricken and the weak. His whole life was spent in the remembrance of God and the service of mankind. And it had been willed so. When he was forty years old and happily married, God reminded him :

> Did He not find thee an orphan and gave thee shelter?
> And He found thee pathless then He guided thee.
> (Qur-án, 93 : 6-7.)

So that if Muḥammad was ever inclined to forget the days when he was a lost orphan, God would not let him do so. And thereby God warns all mankind.

Death of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib

BUT Muḥammad's sorrow was not over yet. Two years later, his aged grandfather now in his eightieth year also died and the weeping orphan followed the corpse of his affectionate grandfather to its last resting place. And the young boy was as sorry about his grandfather's death as he had been about his mother's.

The death of the grand old man was a blow to the whole of Banu-Háshim. There was not one amongst 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib's sons who could take his father's place. Abu-Ṭálib, the full brother of 'Abdullah, was too poor. 'Abbás, another uncle of the Prophet, (as yet a non-Muslim), was rich but greedy. He did not wish to bear the expenses of feeding the pilgrims and other services. Ḥárith the eldest was of no use at all. Abu-Lahab, another son of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, was the wickedest of the lot and a disgrace

to the family. Abu-Ṭálib, who was the most generous and the best beloved of the people, could only retain the duties of *siqaya*, or supplying water to the pilgrims. *Rifadah*, the feeding of the pilgrims and other more important offices of the chiefs of Mecca, passed to Abu-Ṣufyán the son of Ḥarb the son of Omayya.

Abu-Sufyán's Rise to Power

THUS, all the authority, which Banī-Háshim had retained for two generations, passed away at one stroke on the death of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and what is worse, from Muḥammad's fortieth year to his 60th, Abu-Ṣufyán was one of his bitterest enemies. He had a double grudge against Muḥammad. First, because Muḥammad belonged to the rival family of Banu-Háshim who had ousted his father Ḥarb and his grandfather Omayya from the chieftainship of Mecca, and secondly because Muḥammad was for destroying the worship of his idols on which depended Abu-Ṣufyán's greatness amongst the Arabs, in general, and the Quraish, in particular.

This enmity combined with Abu-Lahab's incessant persecution of Muḥammad after the latter's declaration of his mission combined to make the Prophet's work extremely difficult.

But the will of God was being carried out in spite of all risks and all opposition.

Abu-Ṭálib becomes Guardian of Muḥammad

'ABD UL-MUTTALIB, on his death-bed entrusted the guardianship of Muḥammad to Abu-Ṭálib and the latter loved his nephew just as did 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib.

Abu-Ṭálib loved the Prophet. He preferred him even to his sons, for he found Muḥammad intelligent, generous, kind-hearted and noble in his disposition.

To Muḥammad, Abu-Ṭálib was now in the place of father and mother. Muḥammad never ceased to speak well of him and of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib. One of Muḥammad's greatest sorrows was that Abu-Ṭálib never became a Muslim but their relationship in life was the tenderest and most trustworthy, proving for ever that Islám is consistent with true love for one's own relatives though they be of another faith. In fact, the Prophet never ceased to love his bitterest foes and it was no fault of his if some of them never could be reconciled to him. Abu-Ṭálib, though a disbeliever, remained a faithful guardian and a true friend of Muḥammad to the last. In the twelfth year of Muḥammad's life, Abu-Ṭálib made up his mind to go for merchandise to Syria. He did not intend to take Muḥammad with him fearing the hardship of the journey and the passage through the desert.

But Muḥammad, not wishing to be separated from his uncle, clung to him and prevailed upon him to take him to Syria.

THE JOURNEY TO SYRIA

UNCLE and nephew travelled together until they reached Busra to the south of Syria.

Historians state that in this journey a Christian holy man named Buḥaira saw Muḥammad and discovered in him signs of the promised Prophet mentioned in Christian books and that he advised Abu-Ṭálib not to take him to

Syria lest the Jews might recognise these signs and do him harm.

Harm or no harm, however, God's purpose was being fulfilled. Muḥammad's soul was being educated for the task that was coming. The journey made him realise how vast the earth was. His eyes saw the beauty of the heavens and the rising and the setting of the stars in the clear atmosphere of the desert. His soul was making an excursion of the heavens and listening to the spiritual music of the spheres.

Up to this time, he had lived in an unproductive desert but now he was in the midst of the fruit gardens of Syria. What an agreeable change? And what a contrast to the barren hills of Mecca? His free and unfettered soul observed all this, just as porous and thirsty earth absorbs the heavenly rain.

He also passed by Madyan, Wádi ul-Qura and the territory of the Thamūd. He saw their ruins, and in the Qur-án, God reminds the Arabs of these ruins which they pass by in their journeys.

He was still in his twelfth year but his penetrating mind, his powers of observation and memory were already as vast as the heavens and as deep as the universe. God, the Master of Creation, was perfecting the Master-piece of His Creation, Muḥammad. The world stood still between the two.

Abu-Ṭálib also made such a profit in this journey as he had never done before and he never made a similar journey thereafter.

LIFE AT MECCA

MUHAMMAD settled down with his uncle, content with his lot, and doing his best to help and please his uncle in carrying out the duties of supplying water to the pilgrims and other necessary tasks.

He visited 'Ukaz, Majanna and Zul-Majáz, listening to the addresses of the adherents of various religions—Christians and Jews amongst them—also hearing the poets recite their poetry, boasting of their love affairs, of their ancestors, of their wars, hospitalities, liberalities and licentiousness. He wondered at all these things immensely but kept his own soul free from all contamination.

He was an orphan literally and metaphorically. God alone was his guardian and teacher. The mill that was to grind the spiritual food of mankind was being perfected. Every experience of his life had a purpose in it and was being transformed into a fitting instrument for future developments.

The War of Fijár

THE Divine will had determined that Muḥammad should have an experience of warfare as well as of commerce and religious disputations. He was about 15 years of age when one of the perpetual feuds amongst Arabs occurred in the sacred months and hence was called *Ḥarb ul-Fijár* or the unholy war. War was, by custom, forbidden during the sacred months—first, second, eleventh and twelfth of each year.

The cause of this war arose in this way.

A man called Nu'mán bin Almunzir used to send

a caravan once every year to 'Ukáz (where the Arabs met for trade and religious and literary disputations) carrying musk and bringing in return hides, ropes, and other Yemen produce.

It occurred to one Barraḍ bin Qais of Banu-Kanána to capture this caravan. 'Urwa who was the head of this caravan and who belonged to Banu-Hawázin was coming to Ḥijáz *via* Najd. Barraḍ found this out, followed 'Urwa and captured his caravan killing 'Urwa. Then someone amongst the Quraish spread the news that Banu-Hawázin were coming to revenge themselves upon the Quraish. The Quraish and the Hawázin met outside the limits of the sacred territory surrounding Mecca and a fight began between the two.

The Quraish had to retreat till they sought refuge in the sacred territory.

Banu-Hawázin then gave them notice of war next year at 'Ukáz, and this bloody war lasted for four years. Each succeeding year being worse than the one previous, and scores of lives were lost on both sides. Ḥarb, father of Abu-Ṣufyán, who was the leader of the Quraish was also killed in this war.

At last peace was made on the Quraish paying an indemnity for twenty lives—that being the number of Hawázin warriors killed in the war in excess of the Quraish. But this unholy war enfeebled the country for a long time to come.

Muḥammad's part in the war consisted in picking up the stray arrows thrown by the enemy and handing these back to his uncle Abu-Ṭálib who was the chief

of Banu-Háshim in this war. The Prophet did not himself kill or wound any one. He was more or less a mere onlooker but the knowledge he gained of the Arab methods of fighting and their mentality was of the greatest use to him thirty-six years afterwards.

MUHAMMAD AS A SHEPHERD

WHILST under the guardianship of Abu-Ṭálib, Muḥammad had sometimes to act as a shepherd to his uncle, but the details are lacking. Abraham, Moses and Jesus, besides many other prophets before Muḥammad, had been shepherds, and there must be something in the life of a shepherd to suit the temperament of a reformer who has to act as a shepherd of mankind. One tradition states that the Prophet said to his companions: "I used to look after the sheep of the Meccans at Qararit." Another tradition says that when some of his companions were plucking berries from the trees, he advised them to take black ripe ones as these were the best in taste according to his own experience when he was a boy-shepherd.

THE LEAGUE OF FUZUL

THE war of Fijár so decimated the ranks of the Quraish, and its utter uselessness so impressed the minds of some of the thoughtful amongst them, that they made up their minds to prevent any future wars like these.

The fact was that the most exemplary character of uḥammad and the kind-heartedness of his uncle Abu-álib were having their moral effect on the Quraish. Under these circumstances, Zubair bin 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib,

an uncle of the Prophet, invited representatives of Banu-Háshim, Zuhra, and Tīm to the house of 'Abdullah bin Jad'am and gave them a feast; after the feast it was covenanted and agreed in the Name of God (Alláh) that each one of them would help all wronged persons till their dues were restored to them, howsoever great or small they might be. The Prophet, though young, was one of the moving spirits of this league and it is to the credit of the league that no more wars or iniquities took place for many years after its formation.

Muḥammad had the supplying of water to the pilgrims and his care of the pilgrims and his nobility of character soon won him a name and a fame which no other young man possessed. The Prophet used to say in his after-life: "I loved the oath in which I was present at the house of Ibn-i-Jad'am better than the gift of red camels and I would do it again if I were called to it."

MUHAMMAD'S FREEDOM FROM THE WORSHIP OF IDOLS AND FROM ALL FOLLIES OF YOUNG MEN

THE circumstances under which Muḥammad was born and bred, *viz.*, his father's death whilst he was in his mother's womb; his mother's passing away after his having lived with her for a few months only; his grandfather's demise whilst he was only eight and his comparative poverty, combined with his inborn habits of thought made him an entirely different man from the rest of his fellowmen. He had no youthful companions and no desire for enjoying life in the vulgar sense of that phrase. God was guarding him from evil.

Muḥammad had a young companion-shepherd in the desert. Being tired of his hard task he thought of taking a holiday and going to Mecca and listening to the music of singing girls. He left his sheep in charge of his companion, as the latter must have, prior to this, left his sheep in charge of Muḥammad. But before Muḥammad reached Mecca, he was drawn to a marriage party where he stopped. He had not remained there long before he fell asleep and did not wake up till the next morning.

The next day he again came down to town and as the night approached he fancied that some music fell on his ears. So he sat down to hear it. But it was no earthly music. It was the music of his own soul being tuned to the music of the spheres. He again fell asleep till the morning.

As to idol-worship, he always thought it to be utterly useless just as his father Abraham had done before. Muḥammad was a man who never spoke a single word till it was absolutely necessary to do so. All his communications were with his own inner self and with the universe as he beheld it day after day and night after night. His pleasures were all merged in Contemplation. His enjoyment consisted in the development of the freedom of his own soul.

MUHAMMAD'S TRAVELS

But he had to do something for his living and it is certain that from the age of twenty he joined caravans of merchants north, south and east as agent for some of

the rich Meccans. During these journeys and these commercial transactions his conduct was so grand that he soon came to be known as Al-Amīn (the most trustworthy). Under no circumstances did he ever break his word. His honesty was not only above suspicion, but he was the very soul of Honesty. He was the one man upon whom everyone, young and old, could implicitly rely.

'Abdullah bin Abī-Alḥamsá states: "Long before Muḥammad proclaimed his mission I had some transaction with him. The transaction was not completed when I told him that I would come later on but I forgot the affair altogether. Three days after, when I passed the place I found him waiting for me. He was not the least bit angry but only said: 'You put me to the trouble of being present here for three days'."

Patience, perseverance, forbearance and fortitude had become natural to Muḥammad, and the hand of God was directing him to become the leader of the Arabs and a guide to mankind. Soon an event occurred which showed to the people how wise he was.

THE BUILDING OF THE KA'BA

THE Ka'ba is situated in a hollow surrounded by hills, and when Muḥammad was about 23 years of age a great flood flowed into this hollow and broke down the walls of the Ka'ba. Even before this, the Quraish were thinking of rebuilding the Ka'ba as it had no roof, and there was fear of thieves stealing the precious things placed inside the Ka'ba. But superstition made them afraid of making any alterations in the structure of the

Ka'ba because they considered the rebuilding of Ka'ba as a thing forbidden. Now, however, it had been pulled down by an act of God.

By chance, a ship belonging to a man named Báqum got stranded near Jeddah at this time. Báqum was a kind of architect also. When the Quraish heard about this shipwreck they sent Walīd bin Al-Mughīra to buy the ship's wood and other material from Báqum and to bring Báqum with him to help in rebuilding the Ka'ba. He was a Roman or Greek. There was also, at Mecca, an Egyptian who knew carpentry. So, the Quraish started rebuilding the Ka'ba. It was divided into four quarters, and the clearing and rebuilding of each quarter was entrusted to one of the four leading families of the Quraish. But no one would start the clearing of the *debris* for fear of the gods doing harm to him. At last, Walīd started pulling down the quarter known as *Rukunuyyamáni*. The others waited to see the consequences of Walīd's action, but when nothing happened they all started rebuilding the Ka'ba, each one in his own quarter. The Quraish started the foundations with stones removed from neighbouring hills. The building went on merrily till it reached a man's height, and it now became necessary to put in the sacred Black Stone in the eastern corner.

The placing of this stone was considered a very great honour and each of the four families wished to have the honour reserved to itself. But no agreement was possible and a war seemed imminent. The chief

disputants were Banu-'Abd ud-Dár and Banu-Adī. They swore sacred oaths to let no other have the honour.

Banu-'Abd ud-Dár took a cupful of blood and dyed their hands therein as a proof that their oaths were binding on them and hence this form of oath was called "the licking of blood".

When Abu-Omayya bin Al-Mughīra Al-Makhzūmī saw how far things had gone, and being the oldest and the most respected amongst the party, he said to them: "Make the one who first enters the Báb us-Ṣafá your arbitrator." When they saw Muḥammad was the first man to enter they all cried: "Here is the trustworthy (Al-Amīn); we will abide by his judgment." They related to him their story and he heard their threats and he saw enmity sparkling in their eyes. He contemplated for a short while and then said, "Bring me a piece of cloth." The cloth was brought. He spread out the cloth, took the Black Stone with his own hand and put it in the centre of the cloth, and said: "Let the chief of each tribe hold one corner of this cloth." Then by his order they raised it up to the height where the stone was to be fixed in. Muḥammad took up the stone and put it where it was intended to be placed. Thus ended all quarrel and threat of war.

The Quraish continued the building to the height of thirty-six feet and raised up its door in order to let him enter whom they liked and prevent him whom they chose.

Muḥammad had been assisting in the building of the Ka'ba before the dispute about the Black Stone arose but the way he settled the quarrel was a sign from

God as to the greatness of Muḥammad and his position amongst the Arabs seventeen years before the declaration of his mission, or rather, the reception of the divine message, for the declaration came later on. From this day on, it was apparent to Muḥammad and some of the Arabs, but not to the Meccans themselves, that the old idol-worship was a matter of the past, that a new Ka'ba had arisen in the place of the old one; but thirty-seven years more had to elapse before this dream was realised.

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE AND FIRST REVELATION

MUHAMMAD'S MARRIAGE WITH KHADIJAH

MUHAMMAD'S honesty as a merchant made him the pole-star of the Meccan society and there was no one who honoured him and loved him more on that account than his uncle and guardian, Abu-Ṭálib. A strange thing about Muḥammad's mercantile ventures was that they were all prosperous. It happened that when Muḥammad was about twenty-four to twenty-five years of age a lady called Khadījah, daughter of Khwailad bin Asad bin 'Abd ul-'Uzzá bin Qusai wanted a mercantile agent. She was a noble and wealthy lady and had been married twice before. Her second husband had left her considerable property. Many a rich man had offered her his hand in marriage after the death of her second husband but she had refused.

When Abu-Ṭálib heard that she was wanting an agent, he very tactfully made her agree to engage Muḥammad. It this way, Muḥammad set out towards Syria with Maisra, a servant of Khadījah. He passed over the same ground as he did when he went to Syria with his uncle at the age of twelve.

Muḥammad was all ears and eyes on this journey

and he saw and heard a good deal of the Christians living in Syria. He was now a wide-awake man who heard much but spoke little. His commerce was exceedingly profitable—more than had ever been the case with Khadījah's commerce before. And his good manners and genuine kind-heartedness towards Maisra won over the latter's heart completely.

When the time came for them to return to Mecca, Muḥammad bought Syrian merchandise that he considered would please Khadījah. Whilst they were nearing Mecca, Maisra said to Muḥammad: "Hasten thyself to Khadījah and tell her all that God has been pleased to favour her on thy account because she would like to know what is due to thee."

Muḥammad went ahead and entered Mecca at about noon. Khadījah saw him, for she was on the top of her house and he was on camel back. She came down when he entered the house and received him. And she heard all that he had to relate about his journey; about the profit he had made; about the merchandise he had bought and sold. He was the most eloquent of the Arabs and Khadījah listened to his charming story with an open, silent, happy heart.

And then followed Maisra and spoke of the nobility, the honesty, the righteousness of Muḥammad. There was no youth to match Muḥammad, according to Maisra, in the excellence of character or in the greatness of his natural gifts. And in the twinkling of an eye Khadījah's liking for Muḥammad had changed into love. She was forty years old. She, who had refused the noblest of the

Quraish in lineage and wealth, now wished to marry this young man whose manners and words had taken possession of her heart. She spoke about her love to her sister and to her female companion named Nafīsa. But the question was, " Would he accept her ? " Women, however, are great diplomats. Khadījah sent Nafīsa to sound Muḥammad and when they met, this was the conversation that took place:—

Nafīsa: What prevents you from marrying ?

Muḥammad: What have I to marry with ?

Nafīsa: But if that did not matter and you were invited to an object of beauty, wealth, nobility and satisfaction, what would you say ?

Muḥammad: Who is she ?

Nafīsa: Khadījah.

Muḥammad: How can I do that?

Nafīsa: That is my affair.

Muḥammad: I accept.

The intelligence of Muḥammad may be judged from the fact that all his answers except the last are by interrogatories. As a matter of fact, he had found Khadījah's love in his own heart but knowing that she had refused richer men than himself he would not be the first to propose. However, when the proposal came from her, he accepted it with pleasure.

Khadījah made no delay about the marriage. Her father Khwailad had died before Ḥarb ul-Fijár and so her uncle Omar bin Asad gave her in marriage. And a new page was opened in the life of Muḥammad, the life of a loving husband and a devoted father. But alas! happiness is ever tied to sorrow. Muḥammad was to taste the

passing away of his sons in their childhood as he had tasted the sorrow of the loss of his parents in his own childhood.

MUHAMMAD'S APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER

WHAT kind of man was Muḥammad who had captivated Khadījah's heart?

He had the most comely looks, being neither a giant nor a dwarf in size, having a large forehead; large eyebrows with thick hair meeting in the centre over the bridge of the nose, big black eyes, the white of which had a small redness on the sides; eye-lids ending in long eyelashes; a delicate straight nose; teeth with open spaces in between; a beard with a thick hairy growth on the chin; long, beautiful neck; broad chest; spacious shoulders; deep orange colour; thick palms and soles; walking with the body bent forward and with quick firm steps; his countenance showing signs of contemplation and deliberation; his sight proving mastery over his affairs and making men bow to his will. No wonder that these outward shows of a powerful soul had captured Khadījah's love and submission. On the other hand, Muḥammad could hardly have a better wife. If he was the Trustworthy of his people she was the *Ṭáhirah* or the Pure. This was a marriage not only of Muḥammad and Khadījah but of FAITH and PURITY. During their twenty-five years of marriage, and in spite of their inequality in age, they never had any quarrels.

Muḥammad's marriage raised him in the eyes of his people. But with all that he was as condescending as

ever. He mixed with the best of them and helped them in times of stress and difficulty as well as in times of ease and prosperity. The poor, the orphans and the strangers were his special care. He was not the first to withdraw his hands when he shook hands; he never turned his face from anyone; he not merely listened to one when one spoke to him but bent his whole body in attention; he spoke little and listened much, he joined in people's counsels and when requested to speak he spoke nothing but the truth; he laughed till his mouth opened wide but when he was angry he suppressed his anger till the veins between his eyebrows swelled up. He was broad-minded, truthful of promise towards all men. And in charity, goodness and the justice of his transactions he was his own example. His powers of planning things, his determination, his strength of carrying out his plans without faltering were unrivalled amongst his contemporaries. It were these qualities that made his friends stick to him and rely on him against all other men. And no person knew or appreciated these virtues better than Khadījah.

THE DISSENTERS

THE quarrel over the placing of the Black Stone and previous to that the Ḥarb ul-Fijār, or the unholy war, had convinced the thoughtful amongst the Quraish that idol-worship was a mere mockery, and it is stated that one day (the date unfortunately is not given) the Quraish held a meeting in the plantation of Ṭaḥya. Then four of them got up and declared themselves free from idol-worship.

They were Zaid bin 'Amr, 'Othmán bin Huwairath, 'Abdullah bin Jaḥash and Waraqa bin Naufal. And some one got up and said:

"Know ye men, by God your people have no foundation in truth and they are acting on nothing but error. What is the use of our sitting down before, or going round, a piece of stone that cannot hear, see, do harm or good; and the blood of victims flows over its body. O my people! search for a faith other than that on which ye be."

Waraqa became a Christian, 'Abdullah embraced Islám and emigrated with other Muslims to Abyssinia; there he became a convert to Christianity and died. His widow Umm-i-Ḥabībah binte Abu-Sufyán embraced Islám and was married to the Prophet. Zaid bin 'Amr went on journeys to Syria and Iráq but remained a free-thinker, and he used to say, "O God! if I knew how Thou lovest to be worshipped I would do so, but I know not."

As to 'Othmán bin Huwairath who was a relative of Khadījah, he went to Byzantium and became a favourite of the emperor there. It is said that he had the intention of conquering Mecca but was poisoned by someone at the instigation of the people of Mecca. Thus ended the careers of all the four dissenters without leaving any effect on the Meccans or their idol-worship.

MUHAMMAD'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS

YEARS now passed quickly and Muḥammad found in Khadījah true love and the best of wives. She had given

herself to the love of Muḥammad and they were two bodies but one soul. Her soul was entirely merged in his.

She gave birth to three sons and four daughters by Muḥammad. The sons were named: (1) Qásim, (2) Ṭáhir (*lit.* pure), (3) Ṭayyib (*lit.* clean).

The daughters were named: (1) Zainab, (2) Ruqayya, (3) Umm-i-Kulthūm, (4) Fáṭimah.

All the three sons died in their infancy before Muḥammad had received the Divine Message. They left a deep sorrow on the minds of their parents, but both of them had learnt to be patient and contented. They both undoubtedly desired a male inheritor but having none left of their own, they adopted Zaid bin Ḥárith who was sold to Khadījah, who gave him to Muḥammad who emancipated him and adopted him as his son and people called him Zaid bin Muḥammad.

Zainab, the eldest daughter, was married to 'Abd ul-'Áṣ bin Rabī' bin 'Abd-i-Shams.

Ruqayya and Kulthūm were married to 'Utbah and 'Utaibah, sons of Muḥammad's uncle Abu-Lahab. When Muḥammad proclaimed Islám, Abu Lahab prevailed upon his sons to divorce them and they were subsequently married to 'Othmán bin 'Affán one after the other. Both of them died in Muḥammad's lifetime. Fáṭimah, the youngest, was afterwards married to 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib and she was the only child who survived Muḥammad, but she was so stricken with the grief of her father's death that she also expired within six months of that event.

Muḥammad, who was already of a contemplative mind, now gave himself up entirely to the devotion of

the Great Unknown and to the cultivation of his spiritual self. Unlike the four dissenters mentioned above who had hastily changed their religion, Muḥammad questioned his own soul and the Universe for an answer to the puzzle of creation.

There is a hill called Ḥirá about two miles (not three as mentioned by most biographers) from Mecca. Each year during the month of Ramaḍán, Muḥammad retired to the top of this hill now called Jabl un-Nūr (the Hill of Light). There he exercised fasting and prayer so much so that he used to forget his food and his own self—so absorbed was he. What was he contemplating upon? It was the search for the Reality—the Truth for the sake of the Truth only. How did man and other living objects come to be on this earth, and why? Who made the earth, the moon, the sun and the stars? Who put their respective motions into these great bodies? Who made the night and the day? Why was man born and why did he die? And what was the use of this life and its struggles if there was no useful end to it?

All this questioning was undoubtedly the work of God, but Muḥammad as yet found no adequate answer. Every thing that he could see or imagine was subordinate to something that he could not see. Men were born and men died. They could not control either birth or death, nor could any other living beings. The earth, the sun, the stars also were subject to some inexorable will which they could not disobey. Idol-worship could solve nothing. The doctrines of the Christians and the Jews were of no help either. The Christians made a god of

Jesus, a god of Mary and another god of the holy spirit. The Jews made gods of their priests. Surely man with all his weaknesses, and with death staring him in the face, could not be God. Muḥammad retired to Ḥirá to solve this puzzle. Finding no answer in the outer world, he put the question to his own soul. His own self must answer it. But it did not, it could not. He was a man of iron determination. He repeated the experiment every year in the month of Ramaḍán, remaining on the hill for the whole month from one new moon to another.

He could not solve the riddle but something urged him on. Ramaḍán was not the only time of his contemplation. His whole life was now a life of thought. But he did not cut himself away from humanity. He continued in their service reserving one month in twelve for the service of the Great Soul that lay hidden in the Universe. At last, he had some light. What he could not see and hear in open daylight he saw and heard in dreams. He saw dreams of the great Universe, but he also saw dreams of coming events in human life. He related these dreams to Khadījah and they came true. Khadījah believed in him and rather than be angry with him she actually encouraged him in his search for Reality.

Muḥammad was now more than ever heart and soul devoted to his practice of self-investigation and search for the Reality.

When he was in his fortieth year, he was sure that he was going to lead his people to the Right Path but as yet he did not know how. He lengthened his fasts and increased his thinking. He now went out to the

desert in addition to his days at Ḥirá. Then he would return to his Hermitage and think again. This contemplation and roaming lasted for six months and he related his difficulties and fears to Khadījah but, she told him that he need not fear. No evil spirits would ever touch him as he was the personification of all that was good.

THE FIRST REVELATION

ONE day whilst he was asleep in the hollow of Mount Ḥirá, a being came, woke him up and told him to read or recite. Muḥammad replied, "I cannot read". Then he felt that that being squeezed him as if he was going to strangle him, but he let him go, and repeated the order, "Read". "I cannot read", said Muḥammad once again and once again he was squeezed and let go. Again came the same command, "Read". Muḥammad was afraid of being squeezed a third time, and he said, "What shall I read?" and the being said:

"Read with the Name of thy Lord who is the Creator (*lit.* who has created). He has made man from a clot of blood. Read, for thy Lord is most Generous, He Who teaches (man) by means of the pen. He teaches man what man does not know." Muḥammad read this or recited it. The word "Iqra" used in Arabic has both meanings. If we take "Read" in its literal sense we would have to suppose that Muḥammad was asked to read something that was written but as he was illiterate he could not read. Anyhow, Muḥammad only recited what he was told to recite and the being let him go.

The words were imprinted on his mind but when he looked round he found no one. He was now wideawake and reciting the words he had been commanded to recite; but where was the being that had taught him those words and who was he? That had not been explained to him. So far, he had only had dreams but this was something more than a dream. This was a direct answer to his search for Reality. Although he found no one, being a man of great determination he remained there for a time. When he could discover no one and was sure that no one was there, he ran but went on reciting the verses and questioning himself. Suddenly, he heard a voice and raising up his head in the sky he saw the being he had seen before in the shape of a man, in mid-sky, calling to him, and whichever way he looked he saw the same Vision and heard the same voice. And he remained there for some time until Khadījah had to send someone to look for him but he was not to be found in the hollow of Ḥirá. When the Messenger-spirit had disappeared, Muḥammad returned home, filled with his first revelation, but his heart was also filled with fear and trembling. He said to Khadījah, "Cover me". She covered him and he was in an ague as if he had fever. But the fear soon passed away and he cast an inquiring look at her as if he was in need of help. "O Khadījah! what is the matter with me?" And he related to her all that had happened. But she, with a true woman's intuition and being an angel of a wife, had no fear and no doubt. She returned his glances with a look of great respect and honour towards him, and said:

"O son of my uncle, (Khadījah and Muḥammad had

a common ancestor in Qusai) be happy, and firm. By Him in whose hand is Khadījah's life, I do most strongly hope that thou art going to be the Prophet of this people. I swear by Alláh that He will never put thee to shame; for thou art one who unites uterine relations, thou art truthful in thy speech, thou takest the burden of others upon thyself, thou honourest thy guest and thou helpest people when they are in trouble on account of their supporting the truth."

Muḥammad was satisfied and thanked Khadījah with his looks of gratefulness and with his love for her. Then, being extremely tired, he fell asleep and when he woke up he woke up a different man. He was no longer a man of the world. He was like one reborn with a new soul and a new life in him. He knew that the Lord of the Universe was ONE and that he—Muḥammad—was His Messenger and that he was to carry this message to mankind till God's light was perfected on this earth, howsoever averse the disbelievers might be.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FIRST REVELATION

MUHAMMAD had been seeking for the Reality hidden in the Universe and the first Revelation is the beginning of his Book of Learning.

The Reality he is told is his Lord (Arabic RAB) Who is the Creator, Nourisher, Administrator and Master of the Universe. The first lesson of Muḥammad's spiritual Reader begins with His Name.

As man is the principal study of man, Muḥammad is taught that God's object in making man from a clot of blood, *i.e.*, from something that is alive and different

from stones, trees and vegetables is that he should have knowledge and become self-conscious as well as conscious of the Universe surrounding him. Acquired Knowledge is the thing that distinguishes man from the rest of the creation on this earth. And in this acquired Knowledge, the Pen is the main instrument. Not till man began to hold the pen or chisel was there any progress in civilization or arts. And the first Attribute of God which man is reminded of, through Muḥammad, is His Generosity. Thus from the very first moment of the teaching of Islám, Knowledge and Generosity are made the basis of all spiritual progress. The Prophet has said : "*Talabul-'ilmi farīḍatun 'alá kulli Muslimin wa Muslimatin.*" The search of knowledge is incumbent upon all males and females amongst Muslims. And the Chapter (55) named Arraḥmán begins with the words: "As to Arraḥmán (the most Merciful) He has taught man the Qur-án (the Reader). He has made man (and) taught him the art of self-expression."

Thus God Himself is man's teacher and the Qur-án itself is named a Reader or Book. It is not a song but a Book of Knowledge. Again, Muḥammad, and through him every Muslim, is commanded to pray "Rabbi zidnī 'ilma ".

My Lord! increase me in knowledge (Qur-án, 20: 114).

This knowledge is of two kinds, *i.e.*, of things that are or can be encompassed by man with his own experience and things that are beyond his experience. God has undertaken to enlighten man in both kinds of knowledge. That is why the first revelation ends with the words "He teaches man what he does not (or did not) know."

By no stretch of imagination, and by no power of his pen, can man know what is going to happen to him after death except with divine information.

The Qur-án is the Book which gives him this information and directs him how to prepare for the life to come, the life that really matters and for which this existence is a beginning. It is in the next life that man is to become what he is intended for, but this life is all-important because the next entirely depends upon this. As is the seed so shall be the fruit. God's laws are unchangeable. God is Generous and gives man an opportunity to get ready for His Company in the life to come where man shall go on from one stage of grace to another, but if he fails to obey he shall for ever be in a state of regret and sorrow.

And this Book of God's Knowledge is open to all mankind. It does not require men to feed God. He is above all feeding. It only requires men to be generous to one another and have faith in the One God and no other. There are no other gods. So that what is required of man is obedience to the laws of God (both spiritual and physical). He who obeys God is saved. He who obeys his own rebellious self against God's commandments is ruined. This is the essence of Islám and Muḥammad has come to preach and teach this lesson. "There is no deity but God (Alláh) and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God."

It is the history of this Message that is going to be unfolded in the following chapters.

CHAPTER VI

MUḤAMMAD'S MISSION

FIRST SIX YEARS

WHILST Muḥammad slept, after his return from Ḥirá, Khadījah woke. It was now her turn to contemplate. She had known Muḥammad for fifteen years as no other human being knew him. He was the most generous of all men, truthful, honest and devoted to the service of the poor and the weak. He was bound to lead his people from barbarism unto civilization, from ignorance unto knowledge, from hatred unto love, from darkness unto light, from death unto life. But who was this being that had filled the whole space for Muḥammad and who had taught him those wonderful few verses which she also now recited.

She put herself in Muḥammad's place and pictured to herself the whole scene and the agitation of Muḥammad's mind, till she herself became agitated. To her, the loss of Muḥammad's little finger was a loss greater than her life. She must do something to assuage and calm his mind if he again became agitated. His sleep, however, was a sleep of quiet happiness and she was happy too. But Love is not without fears. What would happen to him if he told the Quraish what he had told her? What could she do? She pondered. She

must consult someone who was wise. At last she thought of Waraqa bin Naufal, her relative who had become a Christian and who had studied the Bible and probably translated portions of it into Arabic.

Seeing Muḥammad still sound asleep, she went to Waraqa and told him as briefly as she could all that had happened and her Love for Muḥammad and her hopes for his future.

Waraqa was moved and said:

' Holy of holies! by Him in whose hand is Waraqa's life, O Khadījah, if thou hast told me the truth, the great Law and Commandment has come unto him which came to Moses and most surely he is the Prophet of this people. Tell him to be steadfast."

Quickly she returned home and found her husband still asleep. She now looked at him with hope, happiness and devotedness which her great soul possessed. Never had any man such a wife, never had any prophet such a companion. She looked on for some time. Suddenly he became agitated, his breathing became heavy, perspiration flowed from his forehead, he got up and she heard him say:

> O thou mantled one!
> Wake up and warn.
> And so as to magnify thy Lord,—
> And so as to purify thy raiment
> And so as to flee the abominations.
> And bestow not favours to seek increase.
> And for the sake of thy Lord persevere therefor.
>
> (Qur-án, 74 : 1 to 7.)

Khadījah came to him with increased love and increased happiness and asked him to lie down and have more rest. His answer was: "O Khadījah, the time of sleep and rest is gone, Gabriel has told me to warn my people and to call them towards God and to His service. Whom shall I call and who will accept my call?"

Khadījah worked hard to make his task easy for him and to make him calm. Then she told him what Waraqa had said and, filled with enthusiasm and emotion, she declared her belief in One God and in Muḥammad's prophethood.

But she, like the Queen of Sheeba, had believed before this and her soul was above the worship and follies of her people. She was not the one inspired but she was his companion in inspiration.

After this event, whenever Gabriel came, she used to comfort the Prophet's head on her thighs and on her chest. She had no doubt, as she was an eye-witness of his revelations.

Some days after this, Muḥammad went out to the Ka'ba and met Waraqa bin Naufal there. When Muḥammad had told him all that had happened, Waraqa said:

"By Him in whose hand is Waraqa's life, the great Law and Commandment has come to thee as it came to Moses. And surely they will belie thee, harm thee, expel thee, and fight thee. And if I lived to that day, I would certainly help God the help which He knows."

Then he approached Muḥammad and kissed the crown of his head. Muḥammad was convinced of the Truth of what Waraqa had said and the gravity of his

task. How was he to convert a people given to drinking and gambling, to fornication and looting, to killing each other and boasting? How was it possible for them to leave the worship of stones, images and idols on which they and their forefathers had now persisted for thousands of years? As yet he knew nothing of the troubles and trials of the prophets who had gone before him, but Waraqa's words were ringing in his ears: "They will belie thee, harm thee, expel thee and fight thee."

Khadījah was there always comforting him. She was a woman brought up in comparative luxury and ease. She was an angel in human form, but he wished the great angel Gabriel to enlighten him on things beyond the ken of a woman. But Gabriel delayed his coming. God has His own ways and His own fixed time for every thing. He let Muḥammad wait and think out matters for himself. In this interval, every hour seemed to Muḥammad to be a day and every day a year. The suspense lasted perhaps a week or so but it seemed to Muḥammad to be ages. Man is man. And the charm of Muḥammad's life consists in the fact that it is the life of a man carrying out the divine purpose. Had God been displeased with him? Had He forsaken him? Every lover thinks such things of his beloved one. Love has its fears. And with Muḥammad the situation was so terribly fearful that he could not help himself. It was the excess of his love which was now working upon his heart. "God will never forsake thee," said Khadījah; "God will be thy Helper." Muḥammad had no doubt about it, but the greater the anxiety the greater was the comfort when the assurance came. This was a lesson

to Muḥammad that in God's affairs superhuman patience and superhuman perseverance were the necessary elements of success. And although Muḥammad was inspired as to what God wished him to do, the ways and means of carrying out His message were left to Muḥammad. That was his part of the work. God would show him the path, but Muḥammad himself had to walk it. It is so with every prophet. In the execution of God's commandments Muḥammad had to exercise his own faculties in the same way as other people do. He was liable to mistakes but God took upon Himself to correct his mistakes, if any, so that no one might be misguided. It was, therefore, necessary that Muḥammad should think of the ways and means of carrying out God's message and that was the reason why he was made to cogitate during this interval of revelation. His soul as well as his mind was to be disciplined as no other soul and mind had been disciplined before. The greater the weight the greater the strength required to carry it. And Muḥammad's burden was *the heaviest* ever put upon any man's shoulders. "O soul! it is better for thee to die than to be forsaken!" he would say to himself, and then he would turn to God and say, "O God, enlighten me." And his prayers were accepted. Gabriel came with thundering good news :

> By the forenoon,
> And by the night when it spreads its darkness.
> Thy Lord (O Muḥammad) has not forsaken thee,
> Nor is He displeased with thee.
> And surely the Future is better for thee than the Past.
> And surely in time thy Lord will bestow on thee so that thou shalt be satisfied.

> Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter ?
> And He found thee pathless then He guided thee,
> And He found thee in poor circumstances then He made thee a man of means.
> Then as to him who is an orphan oppress him not thou then.
> And as to him who is a beggar scold him not.
> And as to the blessing of thy Lord, then go on making mention (thereof).
>
> (Qur-án, Ch. 93.)

O ! What glory and happiness is this ? What a satisfaction and blessing from the One on High. Glory of glories ! has man ever received such a message at such an early stage of his mission ?

Muḥammad is assured of himself. The Meccans may believe or the Meccans may refuse him or do whatever they like. His own future is assured. But the assurance carries heavy responsibilities. Muḥammad is to bear up with all troubles. The reminder as to his being an orphan and a poor man implies that there are other troubles ahead but God will help him as He has done in the past. And all this is combined with the command that Muḥammad must be generous and carry out God's message. "And as to God's favour make mention thereof." This favour is nothing but the revelation that he has received. He is not to slacken in carrying out his message as later on he was told :

> O thou messenger !
> Communicate that which has been sent down to thee from thy Lord,
> And if thou dost not (do it),
> Thou hast not delivered His message (at all).
> And God will shelter thee from mankind...
>
> (Qur-án, 5 : 67.)

The agitation of his mind was relieved, and Khadījah had been justified. The Prophet's mouth was enriched with smiles when he saw his beloved Khadījah. From this moment he would rely on God, entirely freed from all anxiety as to what men would do or what men would say. Was he not an orphan when God found in Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and Abu-Ṭálib good guardians for him ? Was he not poor when God put his love into Khadījah's heart, and he became well-to-do ?

The morning of his spiritual enlightenment and the glorious rest of his spiritual night : are not these witnesses of God's favours ? And the future of his spiritual progress is going to be better than his commencement. And so is the case to be with Islám. Carpers may carp, but God's Word goes on from strength to strength :

> They wish to put out the light of God with their mouths,
> And God is not going to stop till He has completed His light,
> Averse though the disbelievers be.
> It is He who has sent His messenger
> With the guidance
> And the true faith
> That He may cause it to be on the top of all faiths,
> Averse though the pagans be.
>
> (Qur-án, 9 : 32-33.)

The faith is firmly established in the hearts of Muḥammad and Khadījah but nothing is perfect without practice.

So the angel comes and teaches them how to pray and what to say in their prayers.

O thou wrapped up !
Wake the night except a little—
Half of it, or make it a little less than that
Or make it a little more, and recite the Qur-án evenly
with clear recitation. (Qur-án, 73 : 1 to 4.)

Muḥammad leads the prayers reciting the Qur-án bowing and bowing down and Khadījah accompanies him —Faith married to Purity—and God is their Witness. Faith begins at home, the Faith that is to prevail over all other faiths. While these two pray Mecca sleeps. No, not quite, there is a boy who finds out their secret. Who is he ?

'ALI'S CONVERSION

ABU-TALIB, Muḥammad's uncle and erstwhile guardian had three sons, 'Ali, Ja'far and 'Aqīl and being generous and not rich he was now in very straitened circumstances. In order to relieve his distress, Muḥammad had prevailed upon him to give 'Ali to be adopted as his son, and Muḥammad had caused 'Abbás to adopt Ja'far. So that, at this time, 'Ali was living with Muḥammad and Khadījah. "To whom are you bowing down ?" asked the boy. "To the One God Who is the Creator of the Universe ; the One Who has no father, mother or son ; Who is above all earthly connections ; Who is Merciful and Generous towards all men," replied Muḥammad. And Muḥammad asked the boy to believe in Him. "I will consult my father," said the boy. But next morning he came up and said, "There is no need to consult my father. God created me without consulting my father, why should I consult him in order to serve God ?"

After Khadījah, 'Ali was the first convert to Islám and he was also the first boy to do so.

ZAID'S ACCEPTANCE

THEN Zaid, son of Ḥárith, Muḥammad's emancipated slave accepted Islám.

It was a good augury for Muḥammad that those who knew him best believed in him first. They themselves were not inspired and it speaks volumes for Muḥammad's personality, integrity and honesty that his household gave him its whole-hearted support. In fact, the secret of Muḥammad's unparalleled success lies in the fact that those who came in most intimate contact with him and who might be supposed to know his failings, if he had any, believed in him and never forsook him—thus proving without a doubt that he was the most sincere man who ever lived on this earth. In his whole life, there was not a single deserter from Muḥammad's most intimate companions. He was so open and frank and faithful that none but the perverse could ever fail to believe in him after knowing him well.

ABU-BAKR'S CONVERSION

IN the days before his mission, Muḥammad was a friend of Abu-Bakr bin Quḥáfa Al-Tayyimī. They used to visit each other and Abu-Bakr knew Muḥammad to be a man of integrity, honesty and truthfulness. Abu-Bakr was a rich merchant. He was known amongst the Quraish as a man well-versed in their genealogy and a man of great influence and honour. He was not called

Al-Amīn or the Trustworthy but next to Muḥammad he was the most trusted amongst the Arabs.

Muḥammad had been thinking of approaching the Quraish on the subject of his mission and here was a chance to try one of the best of them. Muḥammad took Abu-Bakr into his confidence and told him the whole story of his experience at Mount Ḥirá and the visits of Gabriel at his house and he then recited the passages of the Qur-án which had so far been revealed to him and asked Abu-Bakr to believe in One God and to give up the worship of idols. To his most agreeable surprise, Abu-Bakr believed in him without the least hesitation or question. For this early acceptance of the Truth and for other reasons which will appear later on, Abu-Bakr earned the title of As-Ṣiddīq—the Truthful. References to his work in the life story of the Prophet will follow in due course, but it is fitting to quote one passage of the Qur-án here which describes Muḥammad's relation with Abu-Bakr :

> And he who comes with the truth and confirms it :—
> They are the people who practise reverence.
>
> (Qur-án, 39 : 33.)

Abu-Bakr proclaimed his submission to God and His Messenger amongst his own friends, and as they loved him dearly and never did anything without consulting him, the noble-minded amongst the Arabs were converted through him. He became the Messenger's messenger. His conversions included amongst others :

(1) 'Othmán bin 'Affán.
(2) Abd ul-Rahmán bin 'Auf.
(3) Ṭalha bin 'Ubaidullah.
(4) Sa'd bin Abi Waqáṣ.
(5) Zubair bin 'Awwám.
(6) 'Ubaidah bin Jarráḥ.

SECRECY OF EARLY CONVERTS

When Abu-Bakr succeeded in obtaining a convert, the latter was taken to the Prophet, where he declared his Islám. The Prophet then taught him what was necessary. But prayer was one of the earliest duties imposed on all Muslims. Being comparatively few in number and being afraid of the opposition of the Quraish, the Muslims kept their faith secret at this time and they used to go out of Mecca to say their prayers. Muḥammad was a kind father, brother and teacher to all of them. He woke up at night, said his prayers and recited the Qur-án. At day time he would attend the weak and the orphans and the poor and the beggars, and would help them in their difficulties with money, kind words and charitable deeds. He won their hearts. Some of the best amongst the Quraish believed and so did quite a number of the poor and the slaves. Everyone amongst his converts saw that he had come to emancipate their souls from the slavery of idol-worship and the serfdom of ignorance.

THE QURAISH AND ISLAM

Three years passed in this way. Quite a lot of men and women had joined the new faith and the matter could not remain concealed any longer.

People began to talk about Muḥammad, his new faith and the converts he had made. But the priests or caretakers of the idols paid little heed to this faith. They thought their deities, Al-Lát, Al-'Uzza, Al-Manát,

Isaf, Naila and others, to whom they made such costly sacrifices, would look after themselves and be victorious in the end. Those Arabs who had become Christians and Jews—and their numbers ran into thousands—had never been able to do them any harm. What could Muḥammad alone do ? So they thought, not realising the force and vitality of the new faith, and they slept in their slumbers.

OPEN DECLARATION OF ISLAM

BUT God was not going to let them sleep. Time had come to wake them up and shake their superstitions in spite of themselves. God has an appointed time for every thing.

> *Li-kulli nabain mustaqarr.*
> For every event there is an appointment....
>
> (Qur-án, 6 : 67.)

The appointed hour had come for Muḥammad to enlighten his people as per Abraham's prayer, mentioned before, asking God to send a prophet amongst his descendants who would teach them the Book and the Wisdom and who would purify their souls. Hence God's command came :

> And warn thy near relations.
>
> (Qur-án, 26 : 214.)

and again :

> Therefore declare to them openly what thou art commanded,
> And turn away from the pagans.
>
> (Qur-án, 15 : 94.)

In order to carry out these commands Muḥammad gave a feast and invited his relatives to his house and called them all towards God. But his uncle Abu-Lahab cut him short and scattered the people and they went their way. On the morrow, Muḥammad invited them again. When they had finished dining he said to them: "I know not any man amongst the Arabs who has brought you a thing better than I have. I have brought you what will do you good in this life and the next. And my Lord has commanded me to call you to it. Who amongst you will help me in this affair and be my friend, my adviser and my deputy?" Then they all turned their faces away from him and resolved to leave him. But 'Ali although he was a boy and had not yet attained his age of puberty got up and said:

"O Prophet of God, I will be thy help. I will fight him who fights thee." The Banu-Háshim smiled and some others laughed and turned their eyes from Abu-Ṭálib to his son. Then the people left Muḥammad making fun of him. But Muḥammad was made of finer stuff than his countrymen had taken him for.

THE DECLARATION AT MOUNT SAFA

THE chief characteristic of Muḥammad's life was that once he made up his mind to do anything (after due deliberation, of course) he never stopped short of accomplishing it. His courage was absolutely superhuman. There is no other word for it. Mocked by his own relatives he took himself to Mount Ṣafá at Mecca one day, and called out:

"O ye gathering of the Quraish!
O ye gathering of the Quraish!"

The news went round, "Muḥammad is calling you at Mount Ṣafá."

The people gathered there and asked him, "What is the matter?"

He said: "Just consider this, if I told you there was an army at the back of this hill (waiting to attack you) would you believe me?"

They said: "Yes, you are the one without a blemish and we have never known you tell a lie."

He said: "Then I am a warner to you of a severe agony (from God for what you do), O ye Banu 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, ye Banu 'Abd-Manáf, ye Banu-Zuhra, ye Banu-Taīm, ye Banu-Makhzūm, ye Banu-Asad! God has commanded me that I should warn my nearest relatives and I am not the master of any gain for you in this life or of any share in the next except that I ask you to say 'There is no deity but God (Alláh)'."

Hearing this, his wicked and cruel uncle Abu-Lahab got up and said:

"Perish thou this very day, was it for this that thou hast collected us here!"

Muḥammad was very much agitated at this curse but he said nothing except casting a sorrowful glance at his uncle. Abu-Lahab had disgraced his father's name and it was due to his orgies of wickedness that the Banu-Omayya had gained the upper hand at Mecca after his father's death. Muḥammad was deeply stung by the venom of Abu-Lahab's cursed words, but God

was not going to let Muḥammad perish. Gabriel came immediately and comforted him :

> Ruined are the two hands of the father of Fire-brands and ruined is he.
> His wealth and what he earns avail him naught ;
> He shall soon be thrust into a fire full of flames.
> (Qur-án, 111 : 1 to 3.)

THE QURAISH AGAINST MUHAMMAD

AND now the fires of hatred, enmity and barbarity burnt fiercely in the breasts of the chief men of the Quraish, whose evil deeds sat heavily on their souls and whose bread and butter depended upon the worship of idols.

Abu-Sufyán, the leader of Banu-Omayya, Abu-Jahl of Banu-Makhzūm, Abu-Lahab, Umm-i-Jamīl (wife of Abu-Lahab) with others took upon themselves to oppose Muḥammad tooth and nail and to let him have no rest.

But the voice of God had gone forth and everyone had heard the message : " There is no deity but God." At one blow all the shackles of Paganism were broken. People were free to believe in One God and no other.

Away with Hobal, Lát, 'Uzza, Manát and all the other deities of the pagans, away with the fire-worship of the Magis, away with saint-worship and away with all supposed sons and daughters of God. Man is free to communicate with the Creator without any intercessor, priest or wizard. The Soul of the Universe was calling to the soul of man, " There is no deity but I. Come to Me direct ; I forgive all sins when ye come to Me ; despair not of what ye have done in the past, in My presence and subject to My laws you become pure once again. I

will give you everlasting freedom from sin and care. You shall be happy and I shall be pleased with you. But if you deny Me, your deeds be with you and I warn you of the consequences—the fire of regret that leaps out of guilty hearts and consumes them for ever and for ever, as long as I please."

The noble-minded amongst the Quraish obeyed the voice; the poor and the oppressed saw their salvation and believed. The caretakers of the Ka'ba with its 360 deities now awakened to the danger that threatened them. They consulted together—, Abu-Lahab, Abu-Sufyán, Abu-Jahl and the rest of their kind.

THE FIRST LINE OF ATTACK BY THE QURAISH

Abusive Poems

A POET amongst the Arabs was a great personage. They called their poets, Aba-Sufyán bin Hárith, 'Amr bin 'Ás, 'Abdullah bin Zubairi.

These masters of pen composed lampoons and abusive poems abusing Muḥammad and declaring him to be a liar and an impostor, just as the Christians have been doing for many centuries calling Muḥammad evil names. But these poems were barefaced lies and could have no effect. People knew Muḥammad to be honest, truthful, just, kind, liberal and full of love for his country-men. These lies of the poets increased nothing but the fervour and enthusiasm of the Muslims whom no trade and no worldly concerns could keep back from their love of God. They had tasted the favours of God and were above all petty conceits. Besides, some of the

Muslims could give the poets a tit-for-tat of their own coining and so the poets failed entirely to make any impression either on the Muslims or on the Unbelievers.

THE SECOND LINE OF ATTACK BY THE QURAISH

A Demand for Miracles

THE first line of attack having been defeated, the Quraish thought of another trick. "If thou art true and from God on High," they said, "we will not believe in thee unless thou causest forth springs to flow out from the earth, or unless there be gardens for thee of dates and grapes so that thou shouldst cause to flow in the hollow thereof streams gushing forth; or thou causest the sky to fall down, as thou supposest, in solid parts upon us; or thou bringest God and the messenger-spirits as (thy) sureties (*lit.*, face to face); or that there be for thee a house made of gold or that thou ascendest into the sky; and we will not believe in thy ascension either, unless thou bringest down upon us a book which we can read."

To this the reply from God was:

> Say: "Glory be to my Lord; am I aught but a human being, a messenger?"
>
> (Qur-án, 17 : 93.)

The unbelievers were not asking for miracles or signs to be convinced of the truth of Muḥammad's message; they were putting forth questions merely to wrangle. They were materialists who did not believe in a future life and their demands were of wealth and power or of the insolent talk about bringing God and His angels before their eyes. "When will the Hour be?" was one

of their standing questions. To this the answer always was, "God alone knows its appointed time."

"Revive the dead," they said, "or bring the miracles performed by Moses." "All miracles are in God's command" was Muhammad's reply. The reason for their foolish demands being refused by God was His kindness towards them; for, once, this kind of demand is fulfilled and a people do not believe, there is an end to the argument and God destroys the unbelievers. God did not wish to destroy the Arabs and hence His refusal of their demands.

THE REAL MIRACLES

BUT the whole Universe and every single article of God's creation is a sign or a miracle. Can you (the Quraish) or any other beings create a single fly with all its wonderful parts, eyes, wings, legs and senses? Look at the sun, the stars, the earth and the moon. Can you or any of your deities create them or their motions and laws to which they are subject? Look at the wonder of the succession of day and night and its workings on your lives. If the day became permanent where would you find shelter from the heat of the sun or if the night became everlasting what would become of your fields, gardens and produce?

Think of yourselves. Can you govern your own digestion, circulation or breathing? Think of your minds. Was thought and feeling created by you? or, is it the work of God?

Think of the produce of the earth. Who orders the

rain and the sun and the moon which help in bringing forth this produce or is it all your doing or the doing of your supposed deities? Think of the changes of seasons and winds. Who has the ordering of all these things? God or you? by whose laws do the ships sail in the seas and the birds fly in the air? who creates and recreates—your deities who have no power to do good to themselves, or God?

WHAT IS ISLAM?

THINK ye people singly or in parties and if you are true to yourself you will find that what Muḥammad puts before you is the Truth. There is but One God—the Ever-Living, the Merciful, the Creator and Maintainer of the Universe and all that there is in it. He is Unique, no children has He, nor parents, and there is none like Him at all. Obey Him and love your brethren, do justice and avoid all that is shameful, disgraceful and dishonourable. Be clean both in mind and body. Love your parents, serve them and be generous to your relatives. Feed the poor, the traveller, the orphan and the distressed. Do no harm to man or beast. Kill neither your children nor anyone else (except for offence against mankind). He who kills one man unjustly kills all mankind, so to say. He who saves one man's life saves all mankind from disgrace. Exceed not in revenge the limits prescribed by reason. Commit no indecency. Be moderate in spending wealth and waste nothing. God loves not the extravagant, unjust or the breakers of God's peace. He who is the most virtuous amongst you is the

most honourable in the sight of God. Be humble in your dealings with mankind. Pride is man's enemy. Suppress your anger when you are angry. Look after the property of the orphans and devour it not unjustly. Women have their rights against you as you have your rights against them. Deal with them with fairness and love. Whatever you do, you will find before your eyes. Your good actions will be your paradise and your evil ones will be your hell. God will multiply the good actions but He will not multiply the evil actions you commit. He is Just as well as Generous. He forgives all sins provided you repent before death overtakes you and you believe in Him. When you are face to face with death and have not earned any good or have not believed in God at all, then it will be too late for you. Therefore, repent now and do good. Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men but only the *seal* of the prophets. He confirms all that has gone before and completes the law.

THE QUR-AN A MIRACLE

> Say: "You may believe it, or you may disbelieve (it);
>
> Surely as to those who have been given the knowledge before it, when they hear it recited to them, they fall down upon their faces adoring."
>
> And they say: "Glory be to Our Lord, the promise of Our Lord was bound to be fulfilled."
>
> (Qur-án, 17 : 107-108.)

But the majority of the Quraish were not prepared to believe. They had no faith in the future. And how

could they ? They who were given to drinking, gambling and killing. A future life for such a people is too terrible to think of. They wanted miracles, and knowing that miracle had been denied to them they waxed loquacious. "Well," said God, "here is the Qur-án, not yet fully completed. You are proud of your powers of eloquence and poetry. You say your poets are possessed by supernatural beings whom you call *Jin*. Collect all your poets and all your speakers and ask them to produce a single chapter like this Qur-án."

> Say: "Surely, if all men and jinn combined to bring the like of this Qur-án,
> They would not be able to do so,
> Even if some of them were to back the others."
>
> (Qur-án, 17 : 88.)

And the Quraish had their mouths closed. They had demanded a miracle and it was there. Muḥammad was illiterate, they all knew that. Here was what he said was from God. If he was wrong, they could certainly compose something equal to, or better than, what he had produced. For the beauty, force and sweetness of its language; for the clearness, depth and profoundness of its significance; for the charm, vividness and magnificence of its similes, metaphors and figures; for the immediate, penetrating and lasting effect of its admonitions, it has no rival in any language ancient or modern. The Qur-án disarmed all critics and all rivals. Many an enemy of Muḥammad and Islám came to him with evil intentions

and after hearing him recite the Qur-án, went back a believer. If any one disputes this miracle of the Qur-án, let him try and compose a single *Sūra* or Chapter like that of the Qur-án.

No one ever shall be able to do that.

THE THIRD LINE OF ATTACK BY THE QURAISH

Threats, Inducement and Persecution

THIS was the fifth year of Muḥammad's mission and he was now, by God's commandment, declaring the worship of idols to be an unpardonable sin for one who died therein. People were flocking to him and believing in him. The Quraish, or rather the headmen of the Quraish, whose leadership, according to their ideas, was being challenged, were perturbed. Islám was spreading, and it meant ruin to their fame. They still had one hope. Abu-Ṭálib had not followed Muḥammad in his faith. Pressure might be brought upon Muḥammad through Abu-Ṭálib. A deputation headed by Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb waited upon Abu-Ṭálib and they said:

"O Abu-Ṭálib, the son of thy brother has abused our deities, found fault with our faith, has made fools of us and declared our ancestors to be in error. Therefore, either prevent him from doing all this to us, or leave him and us alone to settle this matter, for in this respect thou art as much against him as we are, and we will suffice thee against him."

Abu-Ṭálib spoke to them very politely and turned their wrath away as best as he could. And Muḥammad went on calling people to God with all his might and all his persuasiveness.

The Quraish consulted one another again regarding Muḥammad and revisited Abu-Ṭálib taking with them 'Amr bin Walīd bin Mughira, one of the handsomest and broad-chested youths amongst the Quraish, and said to Abu-Ṭálib :

" Take this young man as your son and surrender Muḥammad to us."

Abu-Ṭálib refused this. And Muḥammad went on with his mission as before. For a third time the Quraish deputation under Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb went to Abu-Ṭálib and said :

" O Abu-Ṭálib, thou art a man of age, nobility and position amongst us, and we have wished thee to forbid the son of thy brother and thou hast not done so. And by God, we cannot bear this abuse of our forefathers, this making fools of ourselves and finding fault with our faith. Either thou prevent him from doing this to us or something will befall thee and him until one of the parties dies."

This was an open declaration of war by the Quraish against Muḥammad and was never withdrawn till the truce of Ḥudaibiya in the seventh year of the Hegira. People who accuse Muḥammad of fighting the Quraish forget that the Quraish were the aggressors and that during all these years Muḥammad had no option but to defend himself and his followers. This declaration of war was renewed by the Quraish time after time, and if Muḥammad took the initiative on some occasions from Medīna that was not because he was the aggressor but because, if he and his followers were to survive, there

was no course open to them other than what they adopted, (but more of this hereafter).

MUHAMMAD'S ANSWER TO ABU-TALIB, RE THE THREATS OF THE QURAISH

THE third visit of the Quraish to Abu-Ṭálib put him in a most difficult position. He was loath to be separated from the Quraish, much less to incur their hatred and enmity. He was poor and could not afford to go against them. On the other hand, he loved Muḥammad better than his own sons and was most chivalrous in character. His mind was torn in two, the love of his nephew pulling it one way and the faith of his fathers and the love of his people the other way. He was unwilling to give up either. What was he to do?

He sent for Muḥammad, explained to him all that had happened, and said: "Get me and thyself out of this difficulty and make not my affair unbearable for me."

If the situation was unbearable for Abu-Ṭálib, it was more unbearable for Muḥammad. Here was the last resource of help on earth and it was going to be withdrawn. So it appeared. Muḥammad thought of his followers and the dangers they had undertaken in following him and renouncing their ancient faith. Could he forsake them? No. He thought of his beloved Khadījah who had stood by him and comforted him. Could he be weaker than she? Certainly not. And above all he thought of God Who loved him and Who had promised to make his end better than his beginning.

He looked at his uncle with the look of love and determination, and said: "O my uncle! By God if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left in order that I may give up my work, I will not do so. I will go on till God help me or I die in the effort."

And the chivalry of the old man was victorious over his earthly concerns. He loved a brave man and the reply of his nephew pleased him though he himself was not a Muslim. In his own mind, he must have considered it to be the height of cowardice to surrender his nephew to the Quraish. He would never do it. "Come near me, my nephew," he said. And when Muḥammad had done so he said:

"O son of my brother, preach what thou lovest. By God I will never surrender thee for anything."

And Abu-Ṭálib called all the Banu-Háshim and Banu-Muṭṭalib and told them what had happened and of Muḥammad's determination. He told them that it was their duty to defend Muḥammad against his enemies amongst the Quraish. They all agreed except Abu-Lahab who threatened them with the long-standing enmity of Banu-Omayya against Banu-Háshim and his own opposition to Muḥammad. But Muḥammad's words carried the day. Friend and enemy alike were saying: "If you put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left in order that I may give up my work I will not do so." It heartened his friends and it frightened his enemies who were now burning in their own fury at their reverse. They had fully expected that Abu-Ṭálib and Muḥammad would be separated from each other by their last move.

But uncle and nephew were cemented, more than ever before, in love and mutual support.

PERSECUTIONS OF MUHAMMAD AND HIS FOLLOWERS BY HIS ENEMIES AMONGST THE QURAISH

THE enemies of Muḥammad were now thoroughly determined to leave no stone unturned in doing him harm. Waraqa had prophesied that they would belie him and do him harm. The uttering of lies against him had been useless, and the second stage had begun. He and his followers were subjected to all kinds of harm both mental and physical. The Quraish tried to make life absolutely unbearable for him and his followers.

Bilal's faith and torture

MUHAMMAD had a negro convert who afterwards used to call people to prayer and was named Bilál. He was a slave of one Omayya bin Khalaf. The latter was angry with Bilál on account of his conversion to Islám but the slave would not give up his new faith. His master used to lay him down on the sand in burning sun and put a stone on his chest so heavy that the slave could not move. When the slave (Bilál) was asked to renounce his faith he only said "One, One" (meaning God). One day Abu-Bakr witnessed his torture, bought him from his master and emancipated him. Abu-Bakr bought and emancipated many other slaves including a female slave of 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb before the latter had become a Muslim. Another woman is said to have been beaten to death by 'Omar or by Abu-Jahl because she would not

give up her faith. Even those who were free were not immune from the beating and vilification of their enemies. The Prophet was not left alone. Umm-i-Jamīl, wife of Abu-Lahab, used to throw night-soil in front of his house, and every day he had to remove it and clear the place; and wherever he went she threw thorns in his path.

And this kind of torture went on for years. This was one of the hardest times of the life of Muḥammad and his followers. The Prophet never abused his enemies, never cursed them or asked God to curse them or destroy them. In this matter he was more tolerant and more forbearing than all the prophets who had gone before him with the single exception of Abraham.

The more Muḥammad, and his followers were tortured the greater was their faith in God and the greater their perseverance in the Path of God. The souls of his followers were filled with the words: "If they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left in order that I may leave my work I will not do so. God will help me or I shall die in it."

To the followers of Muḥammad, all kinds of troubles and tortures, even death itself, became easy. The words of the Qur-án and the example of Muḥammad had made every convert a hero and every slave a better man than an emperor. They understood that the secret of life was happiness in Communication with the Spirit of the Universe, and, compared with this, all else was a mere nothing. The Love of God had filled their hearts and illumined their souls. The Qur-án and Muḥammad were living miracles.

Abu-Jahl's abuse of the Prophet and Ḥamza's conversion

THE persecutions of Muḥammad and his followers became so serious that Banu-Háshim were forced to interfere on his behalf. One day, Abu-Jahl passed by Muḥammad and, whilst doing so, teased him, abused him and his religion and uttered unmentionable words. Muḥammad turned away from him without saying a single word. Ḥamza, his uncle and foster-brother, heard of this abuse. Ḥamza was a powerful, brave man who used to earn his living by hunting wild animals and birds. On this particular day, on his return to town, he went to the Ka'ba but did not salute or speak to anyone as he used to do. Instead, he went straight to where Abu-Jahl was, caught hold of him and, with a blow of his bow, broke Abu-Jahl's head. Some of the tribe of Banu-Makhzūm were going to assault Ḥamza and help Abu-Jahl but the latter stopped them acknowledging that he had abused Muḥammad in very filthy language. There and then Ḥamza declared his faith in Islám and made a covenant to help Muḥammad and to die in the cause of Islám.

DIPLOMATIC PERSUASION (BY THE DISBELIEVERS) OF MUHAMMAD AND ITS FAILURE

HAMZA'S conversion to Islám was the direct consequence of the persecution of Muḥammad by the bitterest enemy of Islám—Abu-Jahl. Something else must be tried as neither threats nor persecution were of much use. This was the suggestion of 'Utba bin Rabī'a, one of the leaders of the Arabs. They consented. 'Utba went to Muḥammad and said :

"O son of my brother, thou hast a great position amongst us, being of noble descent, but thou hast brought forth such a serious matter as has divided our community. Listen to me, I will propose thee certain matters hoping that thou wilt accept one of them. If thou desirest wealth by this work of thine, we will collect together so much wealth and hand it over to thee that thou wilt be the wealthiest amongst us; and if thou desirest honour we will make thee our chief so that we will never decide anything except with thy wish; and if thou wishest to be a king we will make thee king over us. Then if thou agreest to this opinion which I have brought before thee, we will do what thou desirest and we will spend our wealth in thy wish till we have none left."

When 'Utba had finished, Muḥammad began reading out chapter 45 of the Qur-án. He had not read more than 13 verses thereof when 'Utba was so impressed with the Word of God that he shook with fear and stopped Muḥammad from reading any further. He knew at once that bribes were utterly useless against Muḥammad. As a matter of fact he was converted to Islám at heart. He came back and told the Quraish to leave Muḥammad alone. "If Muḥammad succeeds in his work, it will be your success. If he dies, you will be rid of him."

"You have been bewitched by him," said the Quraish; but 'Utba did not budge from his opinion.

EMIGRATION OF MUSLIMS TO ABYSSINIA

THIS was the end of the fifth year of Muḥammad's mission and events had crowded so much that historians

are unable to say which was first and which was second. Threats, persecutions, embassies, counsels, abuse, beating and frightfulness and persuasions were tried one after the other or one before the other without effect and without success. Somewhere in the middle of the year, life became so utterly unbearable for Muslims at Mecca that Muḥammad advised them to leave Mecca and go somewhere else.

"Where shall we go?" they asked.

"Go to Abyssinia, the country of the Negus, he is a just king; and live there till God opens out for you a way therefrom," said Muḥammad.

At first eleven men and four women left stealthily and settled in the kingdom of the Negus. Then it was rumoured that the Muslims were freed from the persecution of their enemies at Mecca and some returned but finding things worse than ever before, they went back with others totalling eighty men not counting women and children, and the majority of them remained there till after the Prophet's own emigration to Medīna when they returned. This emigration to Abyssinia is the first one in Islám.

Some of the famous names amongst the emigrants are:

(1) 'Othmán bin 'Affán (afterwards the third Caliph) and his wife Ruqayya, daughter of the Prophet by Khadījah.

(2) Abu-Ḥudhaifa bin 'Utba.

(3) 'Othmán bin Maẓ'ūn.

(4) 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd.

(5) 'Abd ul-Raḥmán bin 'Awf.

(6) Zubair bin 'Awwám.
(7) Muṣ'ab bin 'Umair.
(8) 'Ámir bin Rabī'a.
(9) Suhail bin Baiḍá.
(10) Ja'far bin Abu-Ṭálib.

These were all eminent people and their emigration shows that even they were being molested beyond their capacity, and were unable to protect themselves at Mecca.

The enemies of the Muslims gave chase to the first batch of emigrants but as luck would have it, the ship in which they were embarked sailed before the Meccans could overtake them. Ja'far bin Abu-Ṭálib was one of the last to emigrate. It appears that the Muslims emigrated in several parties and as stealthily as they could manage for fear of their enemies.

The oppressors of the Muslims could not view this emigration in peace. They were now bent on destroying the Muslims who were, as yet, utterly helpless and absolutely unarmed. The unbelieving Meccans were ill at ease with such a large and influential number of their countrymen being sheltered in a neighbouring country. They lost no time and sent two of their best men 'Amr bin 'Áṣ and 'Abdullah bin Rabī'a as their ambassadors to the Negus. The Meccans had a commercial treaty with the Negus and had some say in his country. The ambassadors took costly presents to the courtiers and patriarchs of the Negus hoping to win them over to their side by these presents.

The ambassadors were presented to the Negus, and

after the usual ceremonies and the offering of gifts of the Meccans they said :

"O king, a number of our renegade slaves have come to thy country. They have split up the religion of their people, and have not joined thy faith. And they have concocted a new faith which we know not, nor dost thou ; and we who are some of the noblest amongst them on account of our descent and our relations, have been sent to thee that thou mayest return them to us, for our people know best how to instruct them and to teach them a good lesson."

The ambassadors had by means of their bribes caused the patriarchs of the Negus to suggest that the emigrants be returned to the Meccans without their being heard in reply to the charges of the Meccans but the Negus refused to follow their advise and sent for the emigrants. When they came, he asked them :

"What is this religion of yours by means of which you have caused a split amongst your people whilst you have not joined my faith nor any other faith."

Ja'far's speech to the Negus

JA'FAR stood up and replied: "O king, we were an ignorant people; we used to worship idols and eat dead bodies, and we committed indecencies and cut our own uterine relations. We trespassed on our neighbours and the strong amongst us devoured the weak.

"We were in this condition when God sent us a messenger of our own whom we knew to be noble by descent, truthful, honest and chaste. He called us to God that we

might declare His Unity, serve Him and leave all those deities whom our forefathers used to worship—deities made of stones. He commanded us to speak the truth, to pay back our trusts, to unite our relatives, to treat our neighbours with goodness and to restrain from things forbidden and from bloodshed. He forbade us all indecencies, lies and the misappropriation of the property of the orphans and the libelling of virtuous women.

"He commanded us to serve God and to join no one in His service, and he commanded us to pray, give alms and to fast. So we believed in him and followed him in what he brought us from God; we served God alone, we made lawful what he declared to be lawful and unlawful what he declared to be unlawful for us. But our people became our enemies and tortured us and put difficulties in the way of our faith so that we might revert to the worship of idols and that we should permit all the evils that we used to permit. At last, when we were oppressed and tortured beyond our power we left our country and chose thee above others and sought shelter in thy neighbourhood and we hope that thou wilt be just to us."

The Negus was so impressed with these words that he asked Ja'far to recite some of God's revelation, and Ja'far recited the opening verses of the Chapter called Mary (No. 19). When the patriarchs heard that, they were greatly impressed and said: "These words are from the same source as the words of our Lord Jesus." "Yes," said the Negus, "these words and what was

given to Moses are from the same niche, get ye (Meccans) gone; by God, I will never surrender them to you two."

On the morrow, the two ambassadors again went to the Negus and said: "They (meaning the Muslims) make serious charges against Jesus." The Negus sent for them and asked them what they said about Jesus. Ja'far again replied:

"We say as to him what our Prophet has taught us to say, *viz.*, 'He is the servant of God and His Messenger and His Spirit and His Word which he sent to the virgin Mary'." The Negus took a piece of wood and drew a line on the ground and said, "I am very happy to say that there is no more difference between your religion and mine than this line."

Thus the truth was made clear to the Negus, and some say that he became a Muslim. Anyway, the Muslims found peace and prosperity in his country and lived there happily for many years till they returned to Medīna.

THE CONVERSION OF 'OMAR AND THE FALSE ACCUSATION OF UNBELIEVERS AGAINST MUHAMMAD

It has already been stated above that part of the first batch of the Muslim emigrants to Abyssinia returned to Arabia but had to re-emigrate on account of increased persecutions. The cause of the return of the Muslims is one of the most notable events in the history of Islám.

At Mecca, about this time (the 6th Year of Muḥammad's mission) there lived a man called 'Omar bin

Khaṭṭáb. He was about thirty-five years of age and in the full vigour of manhood. He was a man of great strength of body and mind, intelligent, quick of action, and very proud—a man who could challenge and beat any of his contemporaries. He was, besides, a patriot who loved his relations and his people most dearly. He was one of the bitterest opponents of Islám and excelled others in torturing and vilifying Muslims. When he saw people emigrating to Abyssinia, his anger knew no bounds. To his mind, Muḥammad was the cause of all this splitting up of his people and an end must be put to his life. He or Abu-Jahl had, it is related, already succeeded in killing a woman who would not renounce her new faith and had tortured others till they could hardly breathe. Muḥammad had in these days taken a house near Mount Ṣafá where he used to congregate with his friend Abu-Bakr, his uncle Ḥamza, 'Ali bin Abu-Ṭálib and a few others. 'Omar knew of this congregation, took up his sword with the intention of killing the Prophet so that he (according to his own view) might rid the Arabs of the root of the disturbance which had separated family from family, relation from relation and man from man, nay a man from his own soul. So he thought, little realizing that Islám was come to unite family to family, man to man and every man's soul to that of God.

On the way, 'Omar met Nu'aim bin 'Abdullah, who either guessed or found out what 'Omar was about and who said to 'Omar :

"O 'Omar, thy soul has deceived thee from

thyself, dost thou think that Banu-'Abd-Manáf will leave thee to walk on the surface of the earth after thou hast killed Muḥammad? Why dost thou not first look to thine own family and put them right?"

The fact was that his sister Fáṭimah and her husband Sa'īd bin Zaid had both become Muslims. When 'Omar knew this from Nu'aīm, he turned back towards their house and went in. Someone, inside there, was reading the Qur-án. When they knew of 'Omar's coming they hid the reader and Fáṭimah also hid the writing.

"What was this that I heard?" he said, and when they said "nothing", he yelled at them: "I know full well that both of you have followed Muḥammad in his faith."

And he caught hold of Sa'īd; Fáṭimah stood up to help her husband but 'Omar struck her and broke her head. Then husband and wife were both moved deeply with anger and yelled back at him, "Yes, we have believed, do what thou canst."

And when 'Omar saw blood flowing from the head of his sister, he was agitated and his love for his family ties overpowered his anger. He became gentle and asked his sister to hand him the writing which they were reading. When he read it, his face changed and he was ashamed of what he had done. He read and re-read the writing and was deeply moved by the beauty of the words and the nobility of thought conveyed therein. His mind softened towards Muḥammad and his soul was satisfied and his natural goodness triumphed over his passions; he went straight to the house where Muḥammad was with

his companions with the naked sword still drawn in his hand. When he reached the house of Arqam where the Prophet was, someone said: "Here comes 'Omar with a drawn sword."

Ḥamza who was present said, "Let him come in: if he comes with good intentions, well and good, otherwise I will strike off his head with his own sword."

As he entered the door, the Prophet got up from his seat and held him by his cloth saying, "O 'Omar, wilt thou not give up thy resistance" or as some say "With what intention?" 'Omar replied: "O Prophet of God, I have come to declare my faith."

Muḥammad and his companions were almost beyond themselves with joy and the shout of "Allah-u-Akbar, Allah-u-Akbar," "God is Great, God is Great" rang so loud that the hills echoed the sound and the whole of Mecca was stirred up with anger or joy according to the recipient's mood and faith.

In no case, did an Arab listen to the Qur-án impartially without either becoming a Muslim or being convinced of the superiority of the Qur-án over all other compositions. What were the words that had moved 'Omar? The following verses speak for themselves:

> Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares the glory of God,
> For He is all-Mighty, all-Wise.
> To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth,
> He causes life and He causes death,
> For He is Capable of doing all He pleases.

He is the First and the Last, the Apparent and the Hidden,
For He knows all things.
It is He who has made the heavens and the earth into six periods and then remains firm in His power.
He knows what goes down into the earth and what comes out therefrom,
And what comes down from above and what rises thereto.
And He is with you wherever you be,
For God sees what you do.
To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.
And towards God is the return of all affairs.
He merges the night into the day and He merges the day into the night.
And He knows what is inside the breasts.
Believe ye in God and His messenger..."

(Qur-án, 57 : 1 to 7.)

It was at these words that 'Omar declared his faith : "I bear witness that there is no deity but God and that Muḥammad is His Messenger."

Thus was the power of the Word of God and the goodness of the Messenger of God becoming victorious over all oppositions and over all obstacles.

THE CAUSE OF THE RETURN OF SOME EMIGRANTS FROM ABYSSINIA AND THE FUTILE TALK OF HISTORIANS ABOUT AT-LAT, AL-'UZZA AND MANAT

'OMAR was a man of action and resolution. His conversion took place after the emigration to Abyssinia. He

now began to fight for Islám with the same vigour as he used to fight against it. Up till now, the Muslims used to conceal their prayers and had to go out of Mecca long distances to pray together in peace. 'Omar overcame the opposition of the disbelievers and prayed near the Ka'ba and so did the other Muslims with him. The news of this liberty went to Abyssinia and Muslims there thought that the enemies of Islám had come to terms with the Muslims but it was not so. On their return, they were disillusioned and had to go back.

Some European historians have made this occasion the cause of scurrilous attacks on the Prophet by saying that whilst reciting Chapter 53 at the Ka'ba in the presence of the disbelieving Quraish, he (the Prophet) interpolated two verses in favour of the deities of the Meccans and that the Meccans joined him in bowing down before God and that on the Prophet becoming conscious of what had happened he renounced those two verses on the morrow. The whole story is, from beginning to end, a tissue of lies. The Chapter in question denounces these deities. How could it possibly contain anything in their favour? The verses run as follows:

> Have you then considered al-Lát, al-'Uzza
> And Manát, the third, the last?
> Are there males for you and for Him females?
> A most unfair division that!
> They are nothing but names which you have given them, you and your forefathers;
> No authority has God sent down for them,
> They follow nothing but a guess and what their souls desire...
> (Qur-án, 53 : 19 to 23.)

That the story against Muḥammad is false is proved by the fact that these verses follow immediately others which declare that Muḥammad says nothing out of his own mind and that all he says in the Qur-án is revealed to him by God. In fact, this chapter No. 53 which describes Muḥammad's Mi'ráj which took place about the end of the 10th Year of his mission had not been revealed when the first emigrants returned from Abyssinia. For the man who had declared that he would not give up his work for any kingdom on earth to have made any concession in the conception of Godhead is an unthinkable idea and against the whole tenor of the Qur-án. The enemies of Islám fall back on the excuse that Muḥammad having made the concession then immediately withdrew it. Who can believe such tales, especially after Islám had had the support of 'Omar and Muslims had begun to pray openly in the Ka'ba?

THE RENEWED PERSECUTIONS OF MUSLIMS

THE humiliation and dismay of the unbelievers of Mecca on the return of their unsuccessful ambassadors from Abyssinia may well be imagined. They knew now that Muḥammad was on the Right Path.

But their pride blinded them to the Truth. Even if the Qur-án was the Truth, they said, why was it not sent to some great dignitary of either Mecca or Medīna? People who had been ready to dip their fingers in blood and who were ready to die over such a small affair as the placing of the Black Stone in position when the Ka'ba was being re-built could not possibly be made to

agree to the whole fabric of their religion being pulled down by one man. The life-and-death struggle between Muḥammad and the unbelievers became inevitable. From now onwards they regarded him as an enemy who must be annihilated. And had not God been on the side of the Truth, Muḥammad could not have survived such enemies.

Muḥammad and his Companions, and Banu-Háshim besieged

THE unbelievers held a council of war and finally agreed to boycott and excommunicate not only Muḥammad and the believers but all the tribe of Banu-Háshim and Banu-Muṭṭalib. They, therefore, wrote out an agreement which was signed by all the enemy tribes of Muḥammad and was hung up in the Ka'ba. It read somewhat as follows:

"Don't have any marriages with any of them; don't buy from them or sell them anything."

They considered that this negative policy would starve Muḥammad and his followers and would surely have better effect than oppression and injury. But these also continued. For two to three years Muḥammad and other Muslims together with Banu-Háshim and Banu-Muṭṭalib were besieged in the ravines of Mecca. This was the first month of the Arabic year, *viz.*, Muharram, in the 7th Year of Muḥammad's mission. In this book the details of the cruelties suffered by Muslims have not been described in detail but other events which are of greater value have been described more fully than in most other biographies of the Prophet.

Before proceeding to the next Chapter, it is necessary to mention a few facts which stand by themselves and do not form part of the chain of events unfolded above.

THE QUR-AN AND THE QURAISH

THE greatest obstacle which the unbelieving Quraish had in their struggle against Muḥammad was the Qur-án. They could torture him, strangle him and do all kinds of harm to his followers but they could not meet the challenge of the Qur-án.

It was the Qur-án that converted 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb and that disarmed Muḥammad's opponents when they went to dissuade him from his faith. If Muḥammad succeeded in establishing the Qur-án to be the Word of God, as he proclaimed, then it was all over with the unbelievers. They explored all kinds of avenues to bring Muḥammad to book but failed miserably. Their first allegation against the Qur-án was that it was taught to Muḥammad.

THE QUR-AN ALLEGED BY UNBELIEVERS TO BE TAUGHT TO MUHAMMAD

BUT by whom? A false witness and a false claimant have to tell lies to maintain their suit. It was so with the unfortunate unbelieving Quraish.

Muḥammad used to visit a Christian named Jábir or Jubair. Jábir was not an Arab but that made it all the easier for the Arabs to allege that it was Jábir who taught Muḥammad what Muḥammad alleged was revealed to him by God. They expected in this way to

make people believe that Muḥammad was a liar. The answer to this from God was:

> And most surely We know that they say: "None but a man teaches him."
> The mother-tongue of the man whom they refer to is foreign,
> And this (Qur-án) is (in) clear Arabic tongue.
>
> (Qur-án, 16 : 103.)

So much so, that even the Arabs could not themselves produce anything like it. The unbelievers were out of court once again.

THE CONVERSION OF TUFAIL AL-DAUSI

ABOUT this time there was a great Arabic poet famed for his wisdom, nobility and influence amongst the Arabs. He had heard of Muḥammad's name and came to Mecca. As soon as the unbelievers heard of this, they flocked to him and told him about Muḥammad being a wizard, an enchanter who bewitched everyone by his speech and warned him not to speak to Muḥammad. Forewarned is forearmed and they thought it their duty to warn Ṭufail. But Ṭufail was not a fool. The more the Meccans spoke against Muḥammad the greater was his curiosity. He said to himself, and might have done so to the unbelievers: "By God, I am a poet and an intelligent man. I can find out what is good or bad and what is right or wrong. If Muḥammad is an impostor, I am the man to catch him out and to decide whether what he says is taught to him by someone else who is a foreigner. I will go and hear him for myself." And he went.

Muḥammad received him and as usual recited the Qur-án to him. Ṭufail believed immediately, and went back to his people and preached Islám there quite independently from any help from Muḥammad, carrying with him nothing but portions of the Qur-án which had been revealed so far. Most of his people became Muslims; and they joined Muḥammad after Mecca had been conquered by Muḥammad. Some biographers state that this conversion took place in the 11th Year of Muḥammad's mission.

CONVERSION OF CHRISTIANS

THERE were many others who believed just as Ṭufail had believed. Conversions, however, were not confined to idol-worshippers. Whilst Muḥammad was still at Mecca, a deputation of twenty Arab Christians came to him and heard the Qur-án and believed. They not only believed but confirmed that he was the Prophet already foretold by Jesus. The unbelievers at Mecca were filled with anger and abused these new converts in these words:

"May God destroy your beasts of burden. You were sent by your fellow-believers whom you left behind to bring news of this man (Muḥammad). You are not content to visit him but you must believe and confirm him as well. Fie on you."

But this saying did not prevent the new believers from following Muḥammad and believing in Islám. In fact, it increased them in faith. They also went back and preached Islám to their people. It is with regard to such people that God says:

Say: "You may believe it, or you may disbelieve (it);

Surely as to those who have been given the knowledge before it, when they hear it recited to them, they fall down upon their faces adoring."

And they say : "Glory be to Our Lord, the promise of Our Lord was bound to be fulfilled."

(Qur-án, 17 : 107-108.)

ABU-SUFYAN, ABU-JAHL AND AL-AKHNAS

It is stated that even such great slanderers as Abu-Sufyán, Abu-Jahl and Al-Akhnás bin Sharīq went stealthily at night and heard Muḥammad recite the Qur-án in his own house but having met one another by accident on their way back they were ashamed of themselves and they swore that they would not do so any longer. Like thieves they came and like thieves they returned. But even so, Abu-Sufyán was destined to become a Muslim. God had, however, sealed the heart of Abu-Jahl and he was killed fighting against Muḥammad at Badr. Abu-Lahab died of fever seven days after hearing of the Battle of Badr. Whilst 'Omar was still an unbeliever, the Prophet had prayed to God, "O God, make 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb or Abu-Jahl a Muslim." His prayer had been heard and 'Omar had become a Muslim and the Prophet had a forevision of 'Omar's conversion and so was not afraid to meet him when 'Omar went to his house (called the house of Arqam) with a naked sword.

MUHAMMAD'S HARD WORK IN CARRYING OUT HIS MESSAGE

Muhammad had been sent to proclaim Islám and invite people to the service of One God. He was not to be

blamed if they refused his message but he was very eager to obtain converts. His idea at this time was to convert the whole of Arabia. This extreme earnestness on his part brought some mild reminders from God, a few of which might be noticed here. They all belong to the period of Islám before the emigration of Muḥammad to Medīna, now known as Hijrat, took place.

First, God lays down the general principle in reply to the unbelievers:

> Then are the messengers responsible for aught except a plain delivery (of their message)? (Qur-án, 16 : 35.)

Two verses further on says God:

> Even if thou (O Muḥammad!) strivest hard for their guidance,
> Yet surely God guides not those who go astray,
> And for them there is no helper. (Qur-án, 16 : 37.)

Chapter 16 is one of the Meccan Sūras of about the time we have been describing in the latter part of this chapter. But even earlier than this, God had said:

> Thou art not a superintendent over them.
> (Qur-án, 88 : 22.)

And then again:

> Surely We have sent down this Book upon thee for the use of mankind with the truth;
> Then he who is guided is guided for the good of his own soul,
> And he who is lost is lost against himself then.
> And thou art not a guardian over them. (Qur-án, 39 : 41.)

When the unbelievers pressed Muḥammad hard for miracles, God told him that miracles were in the hand of God and that in fact every thing had its appointed time, and it was not for any Messenger of God to produce these

miracles except with the permission and foreknowledge of God:

> In any case thy business is to carry out the message,
> And it is Ours to take the account. (Qur-án, 13 : 40.)

But even then, Muḥammad would let himself have no rest, and day and night he was in search of the seekers after truth. It has been stated above that Muḥammad wished all Arabs to be saved from perdition. In fact, he wished all mankind to believe. But God does not force people to Heaven :

> And had thy Lord wished so,
> Surely all on this earth had believed together.
> Wilt thou then compel men until they become faithful ?
> (Qur-án, 10: 99.)

A finer tribute to Muḥammad's work than this is impossible. The impossible was to his mind possible. He had, however, to bow to God's will.

As to the Christians, he nearly killed himself for their sake. He loved them as no one has ever loved them before or after.

> Then it may be thou wilt strangle thyself with grief on their account,
> If they do not believe in this Qur-án (*lit.* news).
> (Qur-án, 18 : 6.)

This verse refers to Christians especially. Truly Muḥammad was sacrificing himself for the sake of mankind. He had absolutely made up his mind to die in doing his duty. " I will go on," he had said to Abu-Ṭálib, " till God help me or I die in it." God did help him but he was the man who acted on the motto " Die before ye die ".

All earthly gain was valueless in his eyes and he thought of nothing but of the saving of mankind—even the hardest sinner and irredeemable man amongst them.

THE STORY OF THE BLIND MAN IBN UMM-I-MAKTUM

ONE day Muḥammad was having an interview with Walīd bin Mughīra, who was one of the leaders of the Quraish. He was a bitter enemy of the Muslims, and Muḥammad strove hard to convince him. Whilst Muḥammad was having this interview a blind man named Ibn Umm-i-Maktūm came to Muḥammad and asked him to teach him (the blind man) some portions of the Qur-án.

Muḥammad did not like this interruption and went on with his interview. The blind man, however, persisted in his request. Muḥammad turned away from him with a frown. When he had finished with Walīd bin Mughīra, God sent Gabriel who brought the following revelation :

> He frowned and turned aside,
> Because the blind man came to him.
> And what shall make thee comprehend—that perhaps he wanted to purify (himself),
> Or that he would mind and then his minding would do him good.
> But as to him who was independent,
> Then thou wast after him,
> Though thou wast not responsible for his purification.
> But as to him who came to thee striving,
> And he stood in awe (of God),
> Then thou didst show negligence towards him.
>
> (Qur-án, 80 : 1 to 10.)

The Prophet was really agitated and thought, perhaps, God was angry with him but Gabriel went on:

> No, no! surely these verses are a reminder,
> Then let him who wishes, mind it.
>
> —(Qur-án, 80 : 11-12.)

This incidence shows how careful God is to rectify even the smallest mistake of the prophets, a mistake which an ordinary man would consider an absolutely justifiable action.

THE ATTEMPTS OF THE QURAISH TO PREVENT MUHAMMAD'S PREACHING OF THE QUR-AN

MUHAMMAD left no stone unturned in the carrying out of his message. He used to go out to the congregations of Arabs at 'Ukáẓ, Majannah and Dhu'l-Majáz, where the people had a fair each year in the sacred months.

The unbelievers had a great conference as to what they should call Muḥammad. At this conference Walīd bin Mughīra, whose interview with the Prophet has just been mentioned, was their president. Someone suggested that Muḥammad should be called Káhin (see Chapter III for a description of Káhins). This view was rejected by Walīd as being inconsistent with the character of a Káhin. Muḥammad did not tell any fortunes, neither was the Qur-án like the sayings of the Káhins. Someone then said, "Let us call him a mad man." "How could you call him that," said Walīd, "he has none of the apparent signs of a mad man?" They then asked Walīd what they should do in the matter and someone said, "Accuse him of witchcraft." "Don't do that," said Walīd,

"because wizards carry threads in which they make knots and do other things which Muḥammad does not do, but I will tell you what you can do. Call him 'A wizard of speech,' and tell all the pilgrims that this man's witchery of speech separates a man from his father, his brother, his wife and his relatives."

And in fact, the unbelievers had some reason for saying so, because when a man became a Muslim he became a man of God. So, the unbelievers went about warning pilgrims against Muḥammad: "Listen not to this man and his witchery of speech or else what has happened to the Meccans will happen to you. Beware of the disturbance which may burn the whole of Arabia."

But when people found the Truth in what the Quraish called "this witchery of speech," *viz.*, the Qur-án, they could not help believing therein. And in a way this saying was an admission by the Quraish that the Qur-án was supernatural.

The unbelievers were in great difficulties to meet the challenge of the Qur-án, and they could not do it. They had a very wicked man called Naḍr bin Ḥárith. They laid their case before Naḍr who used to relate stories of the kings of Persia to the Arabs. Naḍr got money from the unbelieving Quraish and followed Muḥammad wherever the latter went preaching the Qur-án. When Muḥammad began reciting the Qur-án, Naḍr would begin to tell his tales of Persia and of the Persian religion and would say to people, "I tell you tales just as Muḥammad tells you his of the people of foregone ages." Naḍr's sole intention being to create a disturbance and prevent

the voice of God being heard just as in some places when the *Adhán*, or call to Muslim prayer, is being said, some ignorant people begin to ring bells, sound gongs or beat drums, so that the *Adhán* may not be heard.

This event is referred to in the Qur-án as follows:

> And say those who disbelieve :—
> " Listen not to this Qur-án, and talk rubbish whilst it is being recited that you may have the upper hand ! "
> (Qur-án, 41 : 26.)

The unbelievers, having exhausted all their resources of persecution, persuasion, bribery, injury and condemnation of Muḥammad, now resorted to ex-communication and boycott, to besieging and starving Muḥammad and his supporters by the treaty which had been hung up in the Ka'ba.

CHAPTER VII

BOYCOTT OF BANU-HÁSHIM

SEVENTH TO THE TENTH YEARS OF HIS MISSION

FROM the tenth month of the 7th Year of Muḥammad's mission till the tenth year, for a period of close upon three years, Muḥammad and the whole of Banu-Háshim were shut up in a pass away from the population of Mecca. The rest of the Quraish would neither buy anything from them nor sell them anything and all social intercourse was cut off.

The Muslims at this period numbering four hundred or thereabouts were thus divided :

(1) About 80 males with a number of women and children living in Abyssinia.

(2) A number of Muslims of the Banu-Háshim living besieged with Muḥammad and the rest of the Banu-Háshim in the Pass.

(3) Various other individuals and families spread over Mecca and other parts of Arabia but not belonging to Banu-Háshim, who though not actually ex-communicated were also being persecuted by the unbelievers.

The small body of Muslims was thus scattered and cut off from their guide—Muḥammad. Under such circumstances, according to the Quraish, the annihilation of the Muslims and the disappearance of Islám was only a

question of time. And it would have been so but for the unshakable courage and conviction of the Muslims and the help of God which is always theirs.

Muḥammad was not daunted by this adversity. During the sacred months, he would come out of his refuge, for, then, according to Arab custom, all war was stopped. Muḥammad would then go and preach Islám amongst the pilgrims at 'Ukáẓ, Majannah and Dhu'l-Majáz. But Abu-Lahab, the curse of the Quraish, would follow Muḥammad wherever the latter went: whilst Muḥammad preached the Unity of God and love of mankind, Abu-Lahab yelled, "Don't listen to this man, he is a liar."

Muḥammad, hungry and famished, would bear all this and a great deal more of abuse and persecution, but say nothing in reply. He knew that the Word of God was taking root in the hearts of men outside Mecca and the help of God was near.

But during the latter half of the siege so great was the distress amongst Banu-Háshim that they were reduced to eating leaves of trees and the boiled leather of their shoes. The children cried for milk and food but none was to be had. Their parents had become skeletons and cries of the hungry children echoed all over the hills of Mecca.

Abu-Jahl, Abu-Lahab and the other hard-hearted amongst the Quraish were jubilant. The end of Muḥammad, they thought, had come. But whatever the faults, follies and sins of the Arabs of this period, they were not all so utterly depraved. There were brave men amongst them still alive, and though unbelievers, they could not see this state of affairs last long. A nation

who regarded the feeding of the guest as a great honour could not see their own kith and kin starved to death in such a brutal manner. But what could they do? The chiefs were against them. At first a few kind-hearted souls began to smuggle food for the children of the besieged and one of them, Hishám bin 'Amr, was so moved by the pitiable condition of the besieged that he went to Zuhair bin Abi-Umayya. The latter's mother 'Átikah was one of the daughters of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib. Hishám said to Zuhair, "O Zuhair, you eat food, you wear clothes, enjoy the company of women and we know where and how your uncles are in the siege. Are you pleased with such a state of affairs? They are starving for lack of food and there is no social intercourse between them and us. I swear by God that if they were my uncles and I was asked to do what you have been asked to do, I would never consent."

Zuhair felt the sting of cowardice implied in this mild taunt of Hishám and agreed with him that the agreement excommunicating Banu-Háshim must be cancelled. They consulted their friends and three others, to wit: Muṭ'im bin 'Adi, Abul-Bakhtari, Ibn Hishám and Zam'ah bin Aswad joined them. And the five of them covenanted to stand together till the writing excommunicating Banu-Háshim was cancelled.

On the morrow, according to their secret arrangement, Zuhair went to the Ka'ba, performed his Ṭawáf, or circumambulation of the Ka'ba seven times and cried out to men:

"O ye people of Mecca! O ye people of Mecca!"

The people gathered there to listen to him when he addressed them thus :

" Shall we eat our food and put on our clothes and let Banu-Háshim die ? We neither buy from them nor sell them anything. I swear by God I will not sit down till this cruel and unjust document is torn into pieces."

As soon as Abu-Jahl heard this, he cried :

" Thou art a liar, by God thou shalt not tear this document."

Zam'ah, Abul-Bakhtari, Hishám bin 'Amr and many others told Abu Jahl that *he* was the liar, not they, and that all the people present were on their side. Abu-Jahl shook with anger and terror and, knowing that the people were against him, took to his heels.

Muṭ'im then got up to tear the document into pieces, but it is said that on his handling it, he found that with the exception of the words—

" In thy Name O God ! " the rest of the document had been eaten up by white ants or had been decomposed by earth.

MUHAMMAD COMES OUT OF THE SIEGE AND BEGINS TO PREACH AGAIN INSIDE AND OUTSIDE MECCA

MUHAMMAD and his companions in the Pass were now free to come out and they did, but otherwise the enmity of the unbelievers remained as severe as hithertofore. Muḥammad's enemies were bent on uprooting his religion by force as well as by guile.

The persecution of Muḥammad and his fellow-believers was re-doubled and he was unable to help them

against the unbelievers. Only in the sacred months was there really any liberty of speech and even then it was interrupted.

THE YEAR OF SORROW: DEATH OF ABU-TALIB AND KHADIJAH

MUHAMMAD had not been free for many months when his uncle Abu-Ṭálib who was now eighty years of age (Tenth year of Muḥammad's mission) fell sick. When the Quraish knew that Abu-Ṭálib's end was near, they gathered round him and said :

"O Abu-Ṭálib, thou art amongst us as thou well knowest, and thou art in a state which thou canst see for thyself and we are certainly afraid on thy account. And thou knowest what has happened between us and thy nephew (Muḥammad). Call him and make him agree with us and we will agree with him that he hold back his hand from us and we will hold back our hands from him and that he let us and our religion alone and we will let him and his religion alone."

But God had forewarned Muḥammad :

> Therefore yield not to those who declare (the truth) to be a lie.
>
> They wish that thou shouldst be slack so that they might be slack. (Qur-án, 68 : 8-9.)

Muḥammad was called, or came, when the people were present at Abu-Ṭálib's bed of sickness. When Muḥammad was told what they had come for, he said :

"I have only one thing to say and it will make you kings of Arabia and rulers of foreign countries."

Said Abu-Jahl : "Alright, by thy father, let it be ten words."

Said Muḥammad : "Say, 'God is One, we leave worship of all beside Him'."

They all left him and what they said is thus described in the Qur-án :

> And say the unbelievers : "This (man) is an enchanter (and) a great liar.
> Has he converted (*lit*. made) all the deities into One God?
> Most surely this is a wonderful thing."
> And the chiefs from among them break away, saying :
> "Go away and persevere with regard to your deities.
> Most surely there is some object in this (new) thing ?"
>
> (Qur-án, 38 : 4 to 6.)

Nothing was or could be settled between the unbelievers and Muḥammad. Abu-Ṭálib died ; and a few days after him Khadījah also breathed her last.

THE STATE OF MUHAMMAD'S MIND ON THE DEATH OF HIS BELOVED ONES

THE state of Muḥammad's mind cannot be imagined : Grief overtook him as it had never overtaken him before. He used to say that of all earthly calamities the death of Abu-Ṭálib was the greatest. Muḥammad loved Abu-Ṭálib more than any man ever loved his father and Abu-Ṭálib had been more than a father to him. He was his best friend and protector on this earth.

The death of Khadījah made matters still worse. She who had loved him so dearly and comforted him in his physical and mental troubles was no more.

MUHAMMAD'S RENEWED EFFORTS FOR THE PROPAGATION OF ISLAM

WHATEVER his griefs, Muḥammad was now full 50 years of age. His wisdom and experience were a match for a thousand men and his courage and perseverance were unexcelled.

The unbelievers increased their persecutions. One day when Muḥammad was passing through the streets of Mecca a wicked man amongst the Quraish threw mud over his head. Muḥammad did not say a word but went home and his daughter Fáṭimah washed the mud from his holy person. As she did so, she cried: The grief of her mother's recent death and the enmity of the unbelievers towards her father made her burst with tears. Muḥammad, who loved her as dearly as he loved Khadījah, was also deeply moved but not a word passed his lips against his enemies. He checked himself as he always did and simply said, "My daughter, don't cry, God will protect thy father."

ABU-BAKR BEATEN

EITHER at this time or some time previous, whilst the Prophet was praying at the Ka'ba one 'Uqba bin Abi-Mu'īt put his cloth round the Prophet's neck and tried to strangle him to death. Abu-Bakr came running there and asked them to desist saying to them, "Will you kill a man because he says 'God (Alláh) is my Lord'." They fell upon Abu-Bakr and gave him very severe beating.

Once again, the dirty entrails of the animals sacrificed to the deities of Mecca were thrown on the Prophet's back whilst he was praying. The unbelievers laughed but the Prophet was so absorbed in his prayers that he did not notice anything. His daughter Fáṭimah removed the refuse from his back.

ABU-BAKR'S INTENDED EMIGRATION

MATTERS became so serious that even Abu-Bakr, the Prophet's dearest friend, thought of leaving Mecca. With this intention, and probably with a view to searching for a safe refuge, he left Mecca and reached a place called Birk-Alghámid; there he met Ibn ul-Dughnnah, the chief of the tribe of Qárah. Ibn ul-Dughnnah asked Abu-Bakr as to where he was going and was informed that he was tired of being persecuted by the unbelievers of Mecca and was intending to emigrate somewhere else. Ibn ul-Dughnnah, knowing the position and character of Abu-Bakr, could not bear this and accompanied him back to Mecca and told the chiefs of Mecca that Abu-Bakr was under his protection and that they were not to molest him. The unbelievers agreed on one condition, *viz.*, that Abu-Bakr should not recite the Qur-án loud enough for their children and womenfolk to hear. Abu-Bakr at first consented to this but he could not help reciting the Qur-án aloud. The unbelievers complained to Ibn ul-Dughnnah who remonstrated with Abu-Bakr but the latter refused to agree to the condition of the Quraish; and in this way the recital of the Qur-án and persecution of the Quraish went together—the Muslims not willing to

be cowed down and the unbelievers determined to put them down by all means at their disposal.

MUHAMMAD'S JOURNEY TO TAIF AND HIS BEING PELTED BY THE PEOPLE OF TAIF

MUHAMMAD now thought of nothing but of carrying out the message of God. He was certain of success and every injury that he met with in the course of his mission was an incentive to further work. He was willing to die but unwilling to be idle. He told Abu-Jahl that the latter's days were numbered and he told the Quraish generally that they would soon enter the faith which they now ridiculed. As to himself he had no care. God was looking after him. The Message must go forward. Not only Mecca but the whole of Arabia must hear the Word of God.

Accompanied by his adopted son Zaid, he went on foot to Ṭá'if, about sixty miles away from Mecca. This was the tenth month of the Tenth year of the Prophet's mission. On the way to Ṭá'if he went to preach to the tribe of Banu-Bakr and found them as hard-hearted as the unbelievers at Mecca. He then visited the descendants of Qaḥṭán. They were also equally stubborn and refused to listen to Muḥammad. The Prophet might have guessed what sort of welcome he would get from the people of Ṭá'if. He, however, thought only of his duty and not of the immediate consequences of his visit. At Ṭá'if, there was a big temple for the worship of the deity called Al-Lát. The Prophet went there and saw the chiefs of Ṭá'if and invited them to the service of

One God. Banu-Thaqīf were the influential people of Ṭá'if and three brothers of this tribe named (1) 'Abd Yálīl bin 'Amr bin 'Umair, (2) Mas'ūd, (3) Ḥabīb were their leaders. Muḥammad invited them towards God. They were extremely proud. One of them said to him:

"If thou wast the Messenger of God, He would not let thee wander on foot in this way."

The second said: "Was there no one else left to God to make His messenger?"

The third said: "It is dangerous to speak to thee if thou art true; and unfitting if thou art a liar!"

Muḥammad left them but they set the wicked people of Ṭá'if and the children and the young men upon Muḥammad and his only companion. Brickbats were thrown at him till Muḥammad bled profusely. There was nothing left for Muḥammad but to go back to Mecca. Even then the crowd pursued him for three miles pelting him with stones till his shoes were full of blood. About this pelting the Prophet has related, "I fled for three miles from Ṭá'if, but so sore and unconscious was I that I did not know whence I was running or whither."

At last he reached the plantation of one 'Utba bin Rabī'a and the crowd left him. He took shelter there.

MUHAMMAD'S PRAYER TO GOD ON HIS WAY BACK FROM TAIF

If there was any just occasion for any man to curse his enemies, it was now for Muḥammad to do so with regard to the people of Ṭá'if. He was bleeding, and his heart was almost broken at the cruel treatment he had so unjustly

received. He might have said, "O God! destroy these people who are so wicked and not one of them has any sense of fairness." He did nothing of the kind. This is how he prayed to God:

"O God! I bring to thee the plaint of the weakness of my power, the poverty of my means and the contempt of the people against me.

"O most Merciful of the merciful!

"Thou art the Maintainer of the weak and Thou art my Maintainer. In whose hands has Thou put me? He who is a stranger and sour-faced, or he who is my enemy?

"But if Thou art not angry with me, I care not for him because Thy comfort is vast enough for me. O Lord! I seek refuge in the Light of Thy face which illumines all darkness and which sets right all the affairs of this world and of the next from Thine own wrath and from Thine own displeasure. I seek nothing but Thy pleasure, and I have no power to do any good or to prevent any evil except with Thy help."

The above is a literal translation of Muḥammad's prayer but the delicacy of feeling and the humility of heart breathed in these words can only be felt in the original. The Prophet does not complain of the treatment he has received but only of his own weakness and poverty. He is afraid of nothing except God's anger which he avoids by his heart to heart communication with God. To prayers like this God replies:

> Therefore persevere thou a noble persevering.
> They see it far,
> But We see it near. (Qur-ān, 70 : 5 to 7.)

Muḥammad was certain in his own soul that the

Quraish would one day believe in him and was patient against all outward unfavourable portents.

He was now sitting in the plantation of the sons of Rabī'a who served him with a plateful of grapes brought by their slave 'Addás. 'Addás was a Christian and when he heard Muḥammad say "With the Name of God" before he ate his grapes he wondered how an Arab could say that and on his being told that his guest Muḥammad was a prophet, 'Addás at once believed in him.

Muḥammad was now in a most perilous state. He had no protector amongst the Quraish to save him from actual death if his enemies chose to kill him.

He sent his messengers to various notables of the Quraish for protection, but none would undertake it except Muṭ'im bin 'Adi, whose sons took Muḥammad home and told the Quraish that he was under their father's protection.

MUHAMMAD'S MESSAGE TO VARIOUS TRIBES AND THEIR REFUSAL

THE Quraish (or rather the unbelieving Quraish) now knew full well that Muḥammad had no powerful friend left. Muṭ'im bin 'Adi himself was an unbeliever and his protection was not of much weight in the eyes of the Quraish. They knew of Muḥammad's failure to convert the people of Ṭá'if and other tribes of the Arabs. But Muḥammad was never defeated. After his return to Mecca, he visited the dwellings of Banu-Kindah, Banu-Kalb, Banu-Ḥanīfah and Banu-'Ámir. Not a single one of them listened to his voice. They all rejected him and

some with great arrogance.

Banu-'Ámir wanted to help him on condition that if he succeeded they should have the command of affairs. And when Muḥammad told them that that was in the hands of God they rejected him with contumely.

MUHAMMAD'S ENGAGEMENT TO AISHAH AND MARRIAGE WITH SAUDAH

In the Tenth year of his mission, Muḥammad, in order to cement his friendship with Abu-Bakr who had been a tower of strength to all Muslims, was engaged to 'Á'ishah *binte* Abu-Bakr, but the consummation of this marriage did not take place till some years afterwards at Medīna.

Later on, Muḥammad married Saudah, a widow of one of those early Muslims who had emigrated to Abyssinia and then returned to Mecca where her husband had died with no one to look after her. Up to this time the law about Muslim marriage had not been revealed to the Prophet and in fact it was not revealed till long after the Hijrah or emigration to Medīna.

CHAPTER VIII

MUHAMMAD'S ASCENSION

IN this very year (Tenth) Muḥammad had his famous Vision known as *Al-Isra* (the night-journey to Jerusalem) and *Mi'ráj* or the Ascension.

As this journey and this Ascension form a most important part in the theology of Muslims, it is necessary to describe them in detail. It must, however, be stated that the word "*Mi'ráj*" is not used in the Qur-án in this connection. When the unbelievers asked Muḥammad to prove his mission by miracles they asked him to ascend to the heaven and bring down a written book which they could read. The words they used were *Tarq'a fis-samái* (do thou ascend unto heaven). *Tarq'a* "do thou ascend" is from "*Raqiya*" "he mounted or ascended."

The word "*Mi'ráj*" is from '*araja*', also meaning "he ascended".

But there is this difference between the two words that whilst *raqiya* is used for bodily ascension in the Qur-án, '*araja*' is used for the ascension of angels (or messengers) and Rūḥ (or Gabriel) as the following verse shows:

> The messenger-spirits and the (great) spirit ascend towards Him during a day the measure of which is fifty thousand years. (Qur-án, 70 : 4.)

Now, it is agreed by all that Muḥammad's ascension

was a matter of seconds or minutes instead of being days, months or years and the word used for it by all biographers is *Mi'ráj*, the same as used by God for the ascension of the angels or spirits who have no bodies.

Having understood this preliminary remark let the reader make note of what follows.

On the night of this occurrence the 27th of Rajab (7th month) of the Tenth year of Muḥammad's mission he was living in the house of his cousin Hind, daughter of Abu-Ṭálib. Hind says:

"That night the Prophet of God slept in my house. He said his night prayers and then slept and we also slept. When it was yet before dawn, the Prophet of God woke us up. When he said his prayers we prayed with him, and he said:

'O Umm-i-Hání (Hind's sur-name), I prayed the night-prayers with you as thou didst see me in this valley. Then I came to the Holy Land and I prayed there. Then I have performed my morning prayers with you as thou hast seen.'

Says Hind: "I then said to him: 'O Prophet of God, do not relate this matter to the people, they will belie thee and do thee harm'."

He replied: "By God, I must relate it to them."

But this tradition is not believed by some people who, relying on other traditions, say that the Prophet of God was sleeping in that part of the Ka'ba which is uncovered and which is called Ḥaṭím when the night-journey took place. The date given above is also not fully agreed upon. All that is certain is that this event took place between the tenth and thirteenth year of

Muḥammad's mission. It may here be mentioned that the exact dates of all events before Muḥammad's emigration to Medīna, with very few exceptions, are difficult to ascertain as Muslims were not then a settled community and life was so hard for them that they had not yet thought of keeping records of all events. The dates are, therefore, mostly approximate. It is so with regard to this night-journey and the vision of the heavens. It is also extremely difficult to say whether the 'Night-journey' and *Mi'ráj* or "Ascension" took place on the same night or on different nights.

Then again there are people who say that the "night-journey" and "ascension" were both accomplished by Muḥammad with his whole material body, *i.e.*, that he was bodily carried to Jerusalem and then to the highest of the high heavens.

Others say that both these events were spiritual affairs and that the body remained where it was. Ḥaḍrat 'Á'ishah and Abu-Sufyán are authorities for this belief.

There are others who make a compromise and say that the "night-journey" was physical but that the "ascension" was spiritual.

Books have been written and controversies have arisen over these beliefs. Science has, however, now come to our rescue and made it very much easier to understand the *Mi'ráj* than it was for our ancestors.

The Radio is now bringing to us the voice of people who are speaking thousands of miles away and television, which is now a fact, can bring before our eyes the actual pictures of people far away. Our ancestors who rightly

persisted on the Night-journey and the Ascension being bodily functions did so because the things seen and heard by Muḥammad could not, according to their understanding, be explained on any other basis. Now, we know for a fact, that all the visual phenomena of our experience are the result of certain movements of rays or of extremely small corpuscles of atoms of matter. It may be rays only or it may be movements of corpuscles of atoms only, or both, we do not know yet, but we know enough to say that when we see a thing it is the consciousness of these rays or corpuscles falling on our eyes which we call vision and that it is not necessary for the object of vision to be just immediately before our eyes. It may be anywhere as long as the rays or corpuscles emanating from it are capable of reaching our eyes.

Everyone also knows that in a dream, time and space acquire a new meaning. We dream for a few seconds but in the dream we imagine we have lived days and months. We fly in our dreams and move from one place to another as if it were in no time.

In the case of Muḥammad, God had already gifted him with Gabriel or the Trustworthy Spirit who brought to him God's commands. Muḥammad had a spiritual vision of things which others of his time had not and could not. The whole of his claim to Divine Mission is founded on that assertion. If that is denied to him there is an end to the argument. But if that be conceded to him, the *Mi'ráj* becomes easily comprehensible. The *Mi'ráj* is nothing but Inspiration or Revelation raised *n* degrees. And the Qur-án and the other Divine Books

explicitly state that other prophets before Muḥammad had similar experiences.

The prophets are not scientists or philosophers and yet they are told things about the Reality underlying and overlying the whole Universe which are far more difficult to understand than what scientists and philosophers assert. How are the prophets to be satisfied in their hearts that what they are being told is the absolute truth? There is only one way, *i.e.*, actual experience and this is possible only in a spiritual vision. Abraham had it, Moses had it and Muḥammad had it.

When we see and hear people performing dances and singing songs in "Talkies" we do not see or hear the actors in the ordinary sense of "seeing" and "hearing" and yet we do. What was considered impossible a century ago has become possible now and there is no limit to the advance of science. It was, therefore, not necessary for Muḥammad's corporeal self to be carried round the universe, the universe could be brought round to him. The fact of God speaking to Muḥammad is the most wonderful of all miracles if any miracles are ever necessary. But what Muḥammad saw, was not a mere dream. It was the glory of God revealed to the most glorious of all men. Muḥammad's eyes and ears were, for the time being, freed from the shackles of time and space and he beheld the sun, moon, earth, and the heavenly bodies go round as one would behold them if one was in space and not bound to this earth. He saw the past of human generations and their future. He saw the prophets of all ages and what they had accomplished. He saw

the angels of God carrying out their duties and the laws of God working to their destined end. His soul had been praying to God, for years before his mission, for an explanation of the universe; and now for ten years he had been listening to Gabriel and learning his lesson. Here was an ocular proof of all he had been told and all he had been promised. He had enemies on this earth who wished to put an end to his life but he had God as his Friend who wanted to show him what his end was going to be and what would their end be.

THE WRITER OF THIS BOOK AND A STORY

THERE is one difficulty which the reader may not overcome. How is it possible for a man to see in a few minutes or a few seconds the events of years or centuries? But here is a story which bears on the subject and which may interest the reader. The writer of this book is a swimmer, and about twenty years ago he was swimming in deep water at Penang during the time of high tide. Close to him there was a long thin bamboo pole fixed to the bottom of the sea the top of which kept moving about, like the head of a snake, and frightened the swimmers. The water round about was deep but at this particular place there was a submerged rock and some wise man had stuck up this bamboo pole to warn swimmers not to approach this place. This writer, however, was ignorant of that fact, and, not considering the matter carefully and in order to oblige other people who were being frightened by the snake-like motion of the end of the bamboo, dived deep to catch hold of

this bamboo and draw it out of the water. In doing so, his knees struck hard against the submerged rock with terrible force and he was stunned, and might have been drowned. But the sea threw him up and by the grace of God he did not sink again. The swallowed water was somehow ejected and the writer recovered consciousness. The writer was absolutely unconscious to the outside world for a minute or so but during that part of a minute the whole history of the writer's life was revealed to him from the age of four till the moment of diving.

This kind of experience has happened to others and proves conclusively that the mind of man is capable of going through, in a minute, events which ordinarily take many years to happen. There is, therefore, nothing really impossible or unbelievable in Muḥammad's Vision.

THE VISION OF MOSES

THE fact that a man can see in a state of unconsciousness what he cannot see in ordinary senses is borne out by what happened to Moses on Ṭūr.

> And when Moses came to Our appointed place,
> And his Lord spoke to him,
> He said : "My Lord! shew Thyself to me, that I may look at Thee."
> He said : "Thou shalt not be able to see Me, but look at the mountain, then if it remain firm in its place
> Thou mayest see Me."
> Then when his Lord covered the mountain (with His glory)

He broke it into pieces,
And Moses fell down unconscious,
So that when he regained consciousness,
He said: "Glory be to Thee, I turn towards Thee and I am the first of the believers."
(Qur-án, 7 : 143.)

This was the *Mi'ráj* of Moses and in that period of unconsciousness Moses saw with his spiritual eyes what made him the "first of believers". Moses did not and could not see God, for no eyes can ever comprehend Him, but Moses had his super-Revelation in that state of unconsciousness as the next two verses make it quite clear in which God says to Moses:

He said: "O Moses! surely I have chosen thee above the rest of men with My messages and with My speech,
Take then what I have given thee,
And be grateful."
And We wrote for him on tablets instructions of all kinds and a clear explanation of everything,
(And We said): "Hold these then with strength,
And command thy people to carry out the best thereof..."
(Qur-án, 7 : 144-145.)

These were the famous Ten Commandments of Moses which he received during his *Mi'ráj* just as did Muḥammad (as we shall shew later on) and as Waraqa bin Naufal had said to Muḥammad and Khadījah, "The great Law and Commandment has come to him as it came to Moses."

Abraham also had his *Mi'ráj*:

And in this way, We showed Abraham the government of the heavens and the earth, and in order that he

might become of those who are convinced.

(Qur-án, 6 : 76.)

In this last-quoted verse the object of *Mi'ráj* is explained and it is that the Prophet might be absolutely convinced of the truth of all his revelation by actual vision of the things he is being told. It was so with Moses, Muḥammad and Abraham. The Arabic root word in all these verses is "*Ra-á*" = He saw. But the seeing conveyed by *Ra-á* implies seeing "spiritually". The mere seeing with the eye is *Naẓar-á*.

THE DETAILS OF MUHAMMAD'S VISION AS MENTIONED IN THE QUR-AN

THE details of Muḥammad's Vision are given in Chapters 17 and 53, both revealed at Mecca. The first is called

"The Israelites",

but is also known as

"Al-Isra or the Night-Journey".

The second is called

"The Star".

The first chapter above-named does not say in so many words that what is revealed there is what was shown to Muḥammad but it is quite apparent that that is the direct implication of the opening verse of that chapter which reads :

> Glory be to Him who conveyed His servant by night
> from the sacred Mosque to the mosque far-off—
> The one whose precincts have been blessed—
> In order that We might shew him some of Our signs...
>
> (Qur-án, 17 : 1.)

The sacred mosque is the Ka'ba and the far-off

mosque is the mosque at Jerusalem towards which Muḥammad was turning his face in prayers.

Jerusalem is the home of many prophets and is called the Holy Land. Muḥammad had never been there. God willed that he should see it and all the prophets gone before him and many other things besides as the following analysis of this chapter will show. (The numbers in brackets refer to verses of this chapter, No. 17 of the Qur-án):

Muḥammad is shown how Moses was given the Book (Torah) and how the Israelites are descended from the companions of Noah in the Ark. He is then made aware of the history of the Israelites the details of which are spread in other chapters of the Qur-án (3-5). He is particularly made aware of the double destruction of Jerusalem once by the Babylonians and then again by the Romans (4-8). In this there is an indirect forevision of the conquest of the Muslims over the conquerors of the Jews and also a warning to Muslims that unless they are careful they will also lose their conquests as did the Jews. The Qur-án is a guidance and good news to the faithful but they should not be hasty (9-11).

From Jerusalem, Muḥammad is taken up above into space and shewn how day and night, months and years are counted and everything is explained to him most carefully (12). After the working of the solar system has been explained to him, he is shewn how men's deeds react on their future. Every man has his register tied round his neck and no one carries the burden of another. Muḥammad is also shewn how towns and nations in the

past have been destroyed and how some people are engrossed in the gains of this world, and how others, who believe and do good deeds, are desirous of their happiness in the Future. But God is Generous to all. His bestowings are extended to all. God distinguishes some above the others. In fact, the whole philosophy of good and bad or ethics is explained to him. (13-21.) Muḥammad has become aware of heaven and hell and how mankind earns one or the other by its own deeds.

He now leaves these regions behind him and rises to higher spiritual spheres and God gives him the commandments as He gave them to Moses and here are they very briefly. (23-39.)

Serve none but God, do good to thy parents, speak not harshly to them but speak to them nobly and be always gentle and compassionate towards them and pray for them for God's mercy. (23-25.) Be charitable to relations, to the needy and the wayfarer but waste not wastefully (as the Arabs used to do in their time of Ignorance or as people do even now). (26-27.)

If ye be forced to turn away a beggar or a needy man do so with noble speech. Be not stingy or extravagant. God provides all as He likes. (28-30.)

Kill not your children. It is a heinous sin. (31.)

Avoid adultery and fornicbtion. Don't even approach what leads to these sins. (32.)

Commit no murder and do not exceed justice in

punishment. (33.)

Use not the belongings of orphans except in the best way. (34.)

Fulfil your covenants and be just in measuring and weighing. (34-35.)

Pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge and give only first-hand evidence. (36.)

Be not proud. (37.)

And appoint not with God any other deity. (39.)

Muḥammad is then shewn how the whole Universe is subject to One Law—the Will of God and how the whole and every atom, nay every component of every atom praises God and declares His Glory:

> Say "Had there been other deities with Him," as they say, "then they (the deities) would have found a way towards the Possessor of Power."
>
> Glory be His, and High is He above what they say a Great Height. (Qur-án, 17 : 42-43.)

Thus Muḥammad is convinced by his Vision that God alone is running this Universe without any helpers, assistants, companions or rivals. Had there been any rivals they would have found their way to fight God but there are none.

This is the basis of Islám and on this all Muslims stand. The unbelievers may do whatever they like, God's Will always prevails and if they don't see all the consequences of their evil actions it is because God's Will has an appointed time therefor, which cannot be changed. Muḥammad is extremely sorry for the unbelievers because they would not give up the worship of

idols but God shows him :

> The seven heavens and the earth and all those who are in them declare His glory.
> And there is nothing but celebrates His glory with His praises,
> But you (men) do not realise their glorifying...
>
> (Qur-án, 17 : 44.)

Muḥammad does, and that is why his Ascension is so important. He has risen above all other men in spiritual glorification of his Lord and his Lord has raised him above all other men. And in this way the Vision goes on till Muḥammad is commanded to pray five times a day. Before this he used to pray morning and evening :

> Keep up (O Muḥammad !) the prayer from the decline of the day (*lit.* the sun) to the darkness of the night,
> And (the reciting of) Qur-án in the early morning...
>
> (Qur-án, 17 : 78.)

The first period includes noon, afternoon, evening and night prayers. And the reciting of the Qur-án in the morning means morning prayer. Before this the prayers were " before the rising of the sun and before its setting ". Now three more are added thereto.

The *Mi'ráj* or Ascension is a matter between God and His prophets. Each prophet has his *Mi'ráj* according to his capacity. It is not the concern of believers to poke into the matter and raise controversies in an affair which is so highly spiritual and so markedly metaphorical. If everything mentioned in the Qur-án is to be taken literally, then there would soon be an end to our appreciation of its subjects and of its beauties. Those who

insist on the literal interpretation of the Qur-án are reducing its allegories to something worse than human composition.

The account of the *Mi'ráj* or Ascension given in Chapter 53 is highly allegorical and it reads as follows:

> By the star when it goes down
> Your companion (Muḥammad) is neither lost nor deviated.
> Nor does he speak out of (his own) desire.
> It (the Qur-án) is nothing but a revelation revealed
> Taught him by the Master of mighty Power,
> Possessor of Strength : then He remained firm in His position.
> And he (Muḥammad) was in the highest horizon,
> And then he drew near and lowered (himself before God).
> So that he was at a distance equal to the chords of two bows or nearer still.
> Therefore He revealed unto His servant what He revealed.
> His (Muḥammad's) heart was not untrue as to what he saw
> Will you then dispute with him as to what he saw?
> And surely he saw Him in another flight (*lit.* descent).
> Near the farthest berry-tree,
> Near which is the garden of the abode.
> When something covered the berry-tree which covered it.
> The eye deviated not, nor did it transgress;
> Surely he saw some of the greatest signs of his Lord.
>
> (Qur-án, 53 : 1 to 18.)

The translation (with the exception of the brackets)

is literal and is copied from the writer's Translation of the Holy Qur-án published some years ago. Let the reader read it carefully and then ponder over the comments which follow. The Commentary is also the writer's own and not borrowed from any book. If there are any coincidences they are accidental. It is hoped that the text read with the commentary will make this extremely occult matter a little clearer to the reader than it is at first sight.

In verse one above, God begins comparing Muḥammad to a star that appears to be setting to mankind. Is the star lost when it sets or has it deviated from its course when it sets ? A little reflection would show to the man of knowledge (the scientist) that it does neither. It is the earth's revolution that makes the star appear to be lost. The star remains in its own proper position and its own course. It rises again and sets again according to a fixed law—the motion of the earth round its own axis and its motion round the sun in its (the earth's) orbit.

It is the same with Muḥmmad. He is not lost or deviated but goes on in his proper course of life just as does the star (verse 2).

Now the star's movement as well as the earth's movements are not willed by themselves. They are subject to pre-determined laws of God. It is so with Muḥammad's Message from God. He has not willed it out of his own desire. It is revealed to him (verses 3 and 4). He is as much subject to the Will of God in his revelations as is the star in the movements or the earth in hers.

And by whose will is this Qur-án being taught to Muḥmmad ? By the Will of God just as the star moves by the laws of God. The Qu-rán is taught to Muḥammad by the Master of Mighty Power (verse 5) as is also mentioned in the opening verses of Chapter 55.

"Arraḥman (the most Merciful to begin with) Taught the Quran." The first object of *Mi'ráj*, therefore, is the Reception of the Revelation. God, who inspires or reveals this Qur-án, is not any supposed deity of the Meccans. He is the Master of Mighty Power, Possessor of Strength, who remains firm in His own position (verse 6) just as He does in the case of the star. The giving of orders and the government of the heavens and the earth does not disturb God, nor does the revelation to Muḥammad. God remains firm in His Power undisturbed and Complete. But God draws Muḥammad near him and raises him to the zenith of his power just as the star has its zenith of position (verse 7).

The reader, if he likes, can say that all this refers to Muḥammad's corporeal self but it would be nearer the allegory if he took Muḥammad (and his name is not mentioned in these verses but he is referred to by the pronoun " he ") to mean the Spiritual self of Muḥammad. At least the writer would implore him to do so. Now, this soul we have been calling Muḥammad has reached the highest pinnacle of spiritual education and draws himself or itself (pronouns don't matter) near to God but even in doing so he or it lowers himself or itself before God. He is not proud of himself, he does not boast of his achievements. On the contrary, as we have seen, he

complains to God of the weakness of his own powers and of the poverty of his means and bows down before the Will of God saying scores of times every day:

"Glory be to my Lord on High. I praise Him and I ask His forgiveness."

And when he has thus annihilated his own will and bowed it to the will of God, he is encircled by the Will of God just as two bows joined end to end will encircle their chords in between them, and themselves become a circle. The star on the heavens above moves within the orbit prescribed for it by God, so does Muḥammad (verses 8 and 9). Whilst doing so, Muḥammad is continuously in communication with God, and receiving his commands and God reveals to him what He reveals (verse 10).

God may reveal what He likes but what about Muḥammad? Is he capable of bearing God's commandments? Does he doubt what he is being told? God frees him from all false charges and says that Muḥammad's heart is true as to what he sees (verse 11) and those who dispute with him as to what he sees are wrong (verse 12).

The reference to Muḥammad's heart points to his spiritual powers which have their seat in what we, for lack of another name, call "heart".

This finishes one Vision of Muḥammad. It tells us that the Soul of Muḥammad is directed by God's Will and has attained an eminence and strength which are free from all doubt and weakness. That this soul revolves very near to God and, though eminent, is still humble

before God, always bowing itself to God's Will and that this soul is true to God and that Mankind should accept its light and be guided thereby, just as mariners are guided on dark seas by the courses of the stars on the sky, by their risings, settings and their positions in zenith. The stars never lie, nor does Muḥammad. He is always true in his course and constant in his direction :

> Yá Sīn (O Man) !
> By this Qur-án full of wisdom ;
> Most surely thou art one of the sent ones :
> On the Right Path.
>
> (Qur-án, 36 : 1 to 4.)

> And it is in this way
> We have revealed the spirit
> (Gabriel) to thee by Our command.
> Thou didst not know what the Book was nor the faith,
> But We make it a light guiding therewith whom We please of Our servants.
> And most surely thou guidest to the Right Path.
>
> (Qur-án, 42 : 52.)

Muḥammad is the spiritual sun or star by whose light all mankind are to be guided not because he is a deity (God forbid) but because his light is the Light of God and his path the Path of God.

This is not the only occasion Muḥammad had his Vision. He had it once again. But where was it ? Let us follow the verses which were quoted above from Chapter 53. The comment closed at verse 12. What about verses 13 to 18. Where was or is this berry-tree ? or the garden of abode ? and what covered

the berry-tree? No comments of any man will make the reader understand these figures of speech unless he is gifted with pure imagination and unsullied heart. This farthest berry-tree and this garden of abode are the fruits of God's pleasure which only those can realise who realise them. Let us be humble and acknowledge that the Reality of these figures is known to God only. And what covered the berry-tree? what covered the Ṭur when God's glory descended thereon like thunder and broke it to pieces? But whatever it was—

> The eye (of Muḥammad) deviated not nor did it transgress;
> Surely he saw some of the greatest signs of his Lord.
>
> (Qur-án, 53 : 17-18.)

Hundreds of books and thousands of pages have been written on the Prophet's *Mi'ráj* and the present writer has ventured to write a few. May God guide him and the reader rightly and forgive his errors for in this subject man, unless guided by God, is nearer to mistake than truth.

CHAPTER IX

LAST THREE YEARS AT MECCA

FROM THE END OF THE 10TH TO THE 13TH YEARS OF HIS MISSION

ABU-BAKR, Muḥammad's life-long friend and Chief Minister, was the first to confirm his faith in Muḥammad's Vision and was hence styled Al-Ṣiddique, the truthful. But the unbelievers and the waverers were up against him more than ever. There was one thing remarkable about the Meccan unbelievers. They were not hypocrites. Their opposition to Muḥammad and his fellow-believers was open and unconcealed. They again began to beat and torture the Muslims.

FURTHER CONVERSIONS AND PERSECUTIONS

THIS is now the end of the tenth year of Muḥammad's mission and the beginning of the eleventh. Ṭufail bin 'Amr Dausi's conversion has already been mentioned in a previous chapter which is said to have taken place in this year.

Conversion of Abu-Dhar Ghifári

MUHAMMAD'S fame and the principles of Islám had now spread over Arabia. The deputation of 20 converts from

Christianity was inculcating Islám in their own territory and Ṭufail who was a learned man and a leader of Yemen was converting his own people to Islám in Yemen.

But the most fruitful ground for the spread of Islám and its cultivation was being prepared in Medīna. This was due entirely to Muḥammad's preachings to pilgrims and traders during the holy months. The spiritual sun of Islám (Muḥammad) was having his Satellites of faith.

A man named Abu-Dhar of the tribe of Ghifár living at Medīna (as yet called Yathrib) was drawn towards the Truth. He sent his brother Amis to see Muḥammad and find out the truth about him. Amis returned and reported that Muḥammad preached the doing of good and the prevention of evil. Abu-Dhar was not quite satisfied, and so he set out in person to find out the exact truth about Muḥammad. When he reached Mecca he would not declare who he was and wanted to investigate the matter secretly for himself. He met 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib by chance and was led into the presence of the Prophet. Abu-Dhar asked the Prophet to explain to him what Islám was, and immediately believed. His enthusiasm was so great that he returned to the Ka'ba and declared his Islám there. The unbelievers began to beat him and might have killed him but for his being recognised by 'Abbás the uncle of the Prophet who told the unbelievers that Abu-Dhar belonged to the tribe of Ghifár with whom they had frequent dealings. They then released Abu-Dhar but he again declared his faith and was again going to be beaten when 'Abbás had him rescued and sent back to Medīna.

The Conversion of Swaid bin Ṣámit

SWAID BIN SAMIT was a resident of Medīna and was named "the perfect" amongst his people. He heard of Muḥammad and came to Mecca. When he met Muḥammad he said to the Prophet, "I also have the like of what you have."

"What is that?" asked Muḥammad.

"The wise sayings of Luqmán (Æsop)," was the reply. The Prophet heard his sayings and appreciated their value. Then the Prophet recited the Qur-án. Swaid at once acknowledged his faith.

The Conversion of Ayás bin M'ádh

ABOUT this time Aus and Khazraj, the two chief tribes of Medīna, were having quarrels amongst themselves and a deputation of the latter under the leadership of Ans bin Ráfi' came to Mecca to get supporters from the Quraish. With him were a number of young men including one Ayás bin M'ádh. Muḥammad heard of this deputation and preached Islám and its beauties to them. Ayás at once believed but Ans became angry. It mattered little. The seed was sown. Ayás returned to Medīna and died there declaring his faith.

The Conversion of Ḍamád

DAMAD was an inhabitant of Yemen and an enchanter. He had heard that Muḥammad was one possessed of a *jinn*. He came boasting to the Quraish and said, "I can cure Muḥammad of his malady."

He went, or was taken, to the Prophet. He said to the Prophet, "Will you listen to my charms ?" The Prophet said, " You had better listen to mine first " and he recited :

> All praise belongs to God,
> We praise Him and ask His help.
> He whom God guides no one can misguide
> And he whom God causes to be lost has no guide.
> And I bear witness that there is no deity but God (Allah)
> One without a partner.
> And I bear witness that Muḥammad is His Servant and Messenger, etc.

These are the opening words of the address in each Friday prayers and Muḥammad was going to recite further but Ḍamád stopped him and asked him to repeat these words three times and when that had been done, he said, " It is enough. I have heard poets, enchanters and *Kahins* but never heard such a thing before. These words are as deep in their meaning as is the sea. I am a Muslim."

THE WAR OF BU'ATH BETWEEN AUS AND KHAZRAJ

AFTER the return of Ans bin Ráfi' to Medīna an extremely bloody war called Bu'áth took place between Aus and Khazraj in which a great many of both sides were killed. The Khazraj won at first and then the Aus came back and fought so furiously that the Khazraj lost heavily. As in Ḥarb ul-Fijár near Mecca, both sides lost heavily and both were decimated. The only people who gained thereby were the Jews in and around Medīna.

THE JEWS EXPECTING A PROPHET IN THEIR FAVOUR

THE Jews who had been driven out of their homes by the Christians were expecting a prophet to come and help them. The ruin of both Aus and Khazraj made them boast that they would soon capture Medīna and the rest of Arabia and destroy the idol-worshippers as *'Ád* and *Irm* had been destroyed before. "That Prophet will come and conquer you," they said to Aus and Khazraj, who were now both reduced to great straits. Aus and Khazraj jointly appointed 'Abdullah bin Muḥammad as their chief to reorganize themselves but events were shaping themselves independently of these two tribes or of the boasting of the Jews.

The First Pledge at 'Aqaba by a party of Medīnites

'AQABA is a place between mount Hirá and Miná near Mecca. In the eleventh year of the Prophet's mission, he met six men of Mecca at this place on the occasion of the Ḥaj and preached Islám to them. The names of this party are given as follows :—

(1) Abu Imama As'ad bin Zarárah.
(2) 'Auf bin Ḥárith.
(3) Ráfi' bin Málik.
(4) Quṭbah bin 'Ámir bin Ḥudaida.
(5) 'Aqaba bin 'Ámir bin Nabi.
(6) Sa'ad bin Rabi'.

These people spread the news of Muḥammad's mission at Medīna and next year (twelfth of Muḥammad's mission) a bigger and more representative party of Aus and Khazraj came to Ḥaj. Muḥammad met them again

at 'Aqaba and preached Islám to them. Twelve of them represented their party. They became Muslims and made the following pledge at the hands of Muḥammad:

(1) We will join no one (and nothing) in the worship (or service) of God.
(2) We will not commit adultery or fornication.
(3) We will not commit theft.
(4) We will not kill our children.
(5) We will not bring false charges.
(6) We will obey the Prophet of God (Muḥammad) in all that is good.

When they had taken the oath or pledge Muḥammad said: "He who carries it out has paradise for his reward and he who neglects anything of it, his affair is with God. He may forgive or He may not."

And Muḥammad sent Muṣ'ab bin 'Umair to teach them the Qur-án and Islám and to make them understand the principles of the faith.

Muṣ'ab went and preached Islám at Medīna where it spread most rapidly.

The Conversion of Usaid and S'ad bin M'ádh

Mus'ab put up with one As'ad bin Zarárah at Medīna. One day, Muṣ'ab and As'ad bin Zarárah and some other Muslims held a meeting at a certain well in order to do something to convert the tribes of Banu 'Abd ul-Ashhal and Banu Ẓafar.

Sa'd bin M'ádh and Usaid bin Ḥuḍair were the respective leaders of these two tribes. They got wind of this meeting of Muṣ'ab and went there to prevent the meeting having any effect.

Sa'd told Usaid: "How careless you are? These two men (meaning Muṣ'ab and As'ad) are misleading the foolish people amongst us. You better go and tell them to desist from doing so and avoid coming to our quarters. I would go and do it myself but for the fact that As'ad is my aunt's son."

Usaid bin Ḥuḍair put on his armour and went to Muṣ'ab and began to abuse him and call him names without sitting down.

Muṣ'ab replied: "I wish you would come and sit down and listen to me. If I say anything that is not proper you may reject it." "All Right," said Usaid and sat down. Muṣ'ab then explained to him what Islám meant and read out portions of the Qur-án. Usaid believed and after making himself clean, acknowledged his faith and said two Rak'ats of prayers.

Meanwhile, Sa'd bin M'ádh was anxiously waiting for Usaid. When the latter returned, Sa'd asked him what had happened. Usaid replied: "I have told them all about it and they say they will not do anything without consulting you but you are wanted there very badly yourself." Sa'd went and what happened to Usaid happened to him.

The Conversion of the whole of Banu 'Abd ul-Ashhal

BUT Sa'd like 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb was a man of action. He put on his armour, called all his people together the same day and said:

"O Banu 'Abd ul-Ashhal: What do you think of me?"

"You are our leader and chief man. Your advice and your views are always the best and the noblest," said they.

"In that case," said Sa'd, "I will not speak to any man or woman amongst you until you believe in God and His Messenger (Muḥammad)," and, before evening fell, they were all Muslims.

News of the happenings at Medīna were reaching Muḥammad and he was digesting it all and making his own plans. Muḥammad was always all eyes and ears for the good of Muslims. Nothing escaped his notice and every news that he heard was carefully registered in the vast chambers of his spacious mind.

The Second Oath at 'Aqaba

MUS'AB'S preaching was highly successful at Medīna and one result of it was that in the next year (thirteenth of Muḥammad's mission) 73 men and 2 women were deputed by the Muslims of Medīna to meet the Prophet and to induce him to come to Medīna. This was the Ḥaj or pilgrim season, and, by appointment, Muḥammad met them again at 'Aqaba. This was Muḥammad's third meeting with the Medinites. His uncle, 'Abbás bin 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, who was not as yet a convert to Islám accompanied Muḥammad. 'Abbás knew as well as Muḥammad that the unbelievers amongst the Quraish were after Muḥammad's life and whoever sided with Muḥammad would have to fight them. He was the first to speak and he said:

"O ye people of Khazraj! Muḥammad has a position amongst us which you know and we have protected him from our people as much as we could and as you have seen. He is one of the most respected amongst his people and a power in his town. He refused to join any one except you. If you think you can carry out what you promise in calling him to you and if you can defend him against his enemies then the burden of your undertaking is upon you. But if you are going to surrender him and abandon him after having taken him with you, you better leave him alone."

The Medinites replied: "We have heard thee and now we want to hear the Prophet of God."

Muḥammad read out the Qur-án and invited them to Islám and then said:

"Do you pledge that you will defend me as you will defend your women and children?"

Bará' bin Ma'rūr, their chief, stretched out his hand and said:

"We pledge, O Prophet of God. We are, by God, the children of war and we have inherited fighting from our forefathers."

Then Abul-Hathīm bin Taihán said: "O Prophet of God! between us and the Jews there are connections which might be broken. If that happens, it may be that thy God will make it appear to thee to return to thy people and leave us."

Muḥammad smiled and said:

"Nay, in life and death I am with you and you are

with me. I will fight whom you fight and I will make peace with whom you make peace."

The people were then ready to take the pledge but 'Abbás bin Ubádah stopped them saying:

"O ye people of Khazraj! do you know the significance of the pledge you are making with this man? You are pledging him on a red and black (meaning most sanguinary) war against the people (meaning Quraish enemies of Muḥammad). If you think that when your property is plunged into danger and your nobles into death you are going to surrender this man, you had better leave him now. Because if you do so, it will be a shame for you in this world and the next. But if you think you can carry out what you are called upon to do in spite of the loss of wealth and the death of your nobles then take him because it will be for your good both here and hereafter." And the people accepted Muḥammad in spite of loss of wealth and the death of their nobles.

"What shall be for us, O Prophet of God, if we remain firm in our pledge?" they asked.

"Paradise" was the reply.

Then they all stretched out their hands and took the pledge which was as follows:—

"We pledge that we will hear and obey in times of our distress and in times of our plenty and in what befalls us of happiness and of anguish and that we will speak the truth wherever we be, not fearing the censure of the censurers in the path of God."

And Muḥammad appointed twelve men to teach

them Islám at Medīna and told them that he had appointed twelve disciples to preach Islám. There were nine men of the tribe of Khazraj, namely,

(1) As'ad bin Zarárah,
(2) Ráfi' bin Málik,
(3) 'Ubádah bin Ṣámit,

(All these three had pledged themselves in the first oath at 'Aqaba.)

(4) Sa'd bin Rabi',
(5) Mandhar bin 'Amr,
(6) 'Abdullah bin Rwáḥa,
(7) Brá'a bin Ma'rūr.
(8) 'Abdullah bin 'Amr,
(9) Sa'd bin 'Ubádah,

and three men of Aus named:

(10) Usaid bin Ḥuḍair,
(11) Sa'd bin Khuthīmah,
(12) Abul-Hathīm bin Taihán.

Muḥammad and his companions were happy that the whole affair had been accomplished without trouble and without the Quraish being aware of their secrets. Suddenly they heard a voice yelling:

"O ye Quraish! Muḥammad and the young men with him have met to fight you."

The Medinites were ready to fight the Quraish but Muḥammad told them that those were not his orders and asked them to return to their tents and sleeping places. On the morrow, the Quraish visited the tents of the Medinites and asked them why they had pledged themselves to Muḥammad but they got no reply. The

Muslims kept quiet. The Quraish returned uncertain of the situation and the Medinites had time to pack and go back to Medīna.

Then the Quraish found out more about the pledge and pursued the Medīnites but did not succeed in catching any except Sa'd bin 'Ubádah, the ninth disciple of Muḥammad above named. They beat him and tortured him till he was rescued by Jubair bin Muṭ'im and Ḥárith Ummaya with whom he had trade relations and whom he had given shelter before.

THE MOST CRITICAL TIME IN THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD

As the days passed and Quraish, the enemies of Muḥammad, learnt more and more about the pledge of Aus and Khazraj at 'Aqaba they grew more and more violent. The unbelievers and the Muslims could not exist together. The raging fire of disbelief and idol-worship must fight the Light of Islám and put it out if it could. Muḥammad knew all this beforehand and hence his precautions in the pledge he took at 'Aqaba. Before the Quraish could kill his followers he ordered them to emigrate to Madīna.

Emigration of Muslims to Medīna

SINGLY, and in parties of twos and threes the Muslims left Mecca for Medīna where they were most welcome, till excepting Muḥammad, 'Alī, Abu-Bakr, some women, old men and children no one amongst the Muslims was left at Mecca.

The hardships which the emigrant Muslims suffered are beyond all description. Some were caught and put in wells and prisons; some had their wives and children taken away from them. Most of them were forced to leave all their wealth behind them. One man at least was persuaded back from Medīna on the pretext that his mother was dying, and he was tortured and imprisoned. A detailed story of these persecutions would require a separate chapter. The unbelievers were really enraged, and as they are dead and gone, it is best to leave their doings to God. It is not fit for Muslims to abuse them when their Prophet never did anything of the kind.

The plot to kill Muḥammad

It is now the 13th year of Muḥammad's mission and Mecca is clear of all Muslims except those mentioned just above. The disbelievers amongst the Quraish did not know whether Muḥammad was going to remain at Mecca as he had done when the Muslims had gone to Abyssinia on their first emigration or whether he was going to Medīna. Muḥammad kept his own counsel. Even when Abu-Bakr, his most intimate friend, asked him about it he said " Wait, perhaps you will be with me." But Muḥammad would not tell him how and when he was going. Abu-Bakr, however, could see things for himself and kept three well-fed camels ready for the emergency and made all his preparations to leave at a moment's notice.

The Quraish grew more and more impatient. The fire of hatred and enmity which was in their hearts was

eating up their souls. They were in a hell. They had abused, strangled and besieged this man (Muḥammad) but he had survived all these persecutions. He had outwitted them every time. Some of their best men were now Muslims and even amongst the unbelievers 'Abbás, son of Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and others were still ready to lay down their lives for him. The thirty odd months' siege and boycott had done no good. And all Medīna was on his side now. The trade of the Quraish with Syria might be stopped. The pilgrimage to Mecca and Miná might be interrupted. Nay, his followers might fall upon the Meccans and take revenge for past injuries done to them and their deceased brethren. Something must be done to put an end to this never-ending trouble. They held a council at Dárul-Nadwah, the parliament hall of the Meccans, built by Quṣayy (see Chapter II). Fourteen of the Chiefs of the Quraish excluding an old man from Nejd were the leaders of this counsel and all the tribes were represented as follows:—

Banu 'Abd-Shams by

(1) Shaibah } sons of Rabiah.
(2) 'Utabah }
(3) Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarab bin Ommayya

Banu Naufal by

(4) Ṭu'aimah bin Adi
(5) Jubair bin Muṭ'im
(6) Hárith bin 'Ámir

Banu 'Abd ud-dár by

(7) Naḍr bin Hárith bin Kaldah

Banu As'ad bin Abd ul-'Uzzá by
(8) Abul-Bakhtarī bin Hishám
(9) Zam'ah bin Aswad
(10) Hakīm bin Ḥizám
Banu Makhzum by
(11) Abu Jahl bin Hishám
Banu Sáham by
(12) Nabiah
(13) Munnabah, sons of Ḥajjáj
Banu Jumah by
(14) Ummayya bin Khalaf (the erstwhile master of Bilál, Muḥammad's Mu'adhdhin).

One man suggested that Muḥammad should be chained and shackled and shut up in a room till he died like the poets Zuhair and Nábighah (see Chapter III for the cruelties of Arabs).

The old man from Nejd said: "No, the news will leak out and his helpers would rescue him and kill you."

Another man said: "Or tie him to a camel and expel him to some out-of-the-way place and let him live or die."

The old man from Nejd said: "You forget his persuasiveness and his witchery of speech. Wherever he goes the people will be with him and he will come back and have his revenge on you."

Abu-Jahl of Banu Makhzūm who was the last to speak, said:

(1) Let each tribe pick out its bravest young men.
(2) Let these braves surround the house of Muḥammad by night.
(3) When Muḥammad comes out to say his

> morning prayers let all the braves fall upon him together and kill him at once. All the tribes being represented in the murder, Muḥammad's tribe 'Abd-Manáf or Banu Háshim will not be able to fight all, and will be forced to accept ransom money.

This proposal was unanimously approved and accepted.

Muḥammad was informed of all that had happened and the state of affairs at this time is referred to in many verses of the Qur-án. A few will do:

> And remember when you were few (and) were looked upon as weak in the land,
> You were afraid lest other people might pounce upon you and carry you away,
> Then He gave you shelter,
> And strengthened you with His help,
> And He provided you with good things,
> That you might give thanks. (Qur-án, 8 : 26.)

This refers to the Muslims who took refuge at Medīna and their condition before and after their emigration. At Mecca they were in daily fear of assault, kidnapping and torture. At Medīna, they had not only shelter but the good things which the Medinites shared with them and the prizes of war which they won later on together with their protectors.

That this verse refers especially to these emigrants is made more certain when four verses later God reminds the Prophet himself thus:

> And remember when the disbelievers began to make their plans with regard to thee (Muḥammad),

To put thee in confinement
Or to kill thee,
Or to turn thee out.
They made their plans
And God made His,
And God is the best of plan makers. (Qur-án, 8 : 30.)

According to this plan of God, Muḥammad left 'Alī in his bed with full instructions as to what he was to do, and himself went to the house of Abu-Bakr. How he managed, all by himself, to escape the vigilance of the guard put on his house we do not know. The Meccans slept peacefully in their homes being certain of seeing Muḥammad murdered on the morrow and their being rid of him for ever. He was their most obstructive genius, and he being removed, other matters would be settled in the usual Arabic method of fighting and ransoms.

So great was the Prophet's secrecy that even Abu-Bakr did not, till this very moment, know about their journey but he was quite ready.

Abu-Bakr's daughter Asmá' gave them a bag full of dried and pounded oats and there being no string to tie the bag she tore her waist-band into two and tied it therewith. She was henceforth called the "Mistress of Two Bands".

In the dead-dark of the night the two made a hasty retreat to a mountain called Mount Thaur about five miles from Mecca which is extremely hard to climb. This mountain is towards the south of Mecca (while Medīna is towards the north) and has a covered ravine or cave in it. The two of them, after great hardship, entered the cave.

Abu-Bakr stopped all the holes in the cave with rags torn out of his clothing and let Muḥammad rest whilst he kept watch. It is said that he was stung by a snake or a scorpion but would not awake the Prophet. At last his tears falling on the Prophet's cheeks (who was resting on his lap) woke him up. The Prophet applied his saliva to the sting and Abu-Bakr was healed.

'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib had been left in Muḥammad's bed covered with his green mantle and the young braves of the Quraish peeped into the house and made sure that Muḥammad was there secure in their hands. Muḥammad had with him people's trusts and 'Alī's instructions were to pay back these trusts and to meet him at Medīna. No body knew of Muḥammad's hiding place except Asmá', 'Áisha (daughters of Abu-Bakr), and 'Abdullah bin Abu-Bakr.

'Alī slept soundly the sleep of an innocent and undisturbed soul till the morning when he rose and the Quraish guards rubbed their eyes and found him to be who he was. "Where is Muḥammad?" they asked. "How do I know? You were the watchmen, not I," said 'Alī.

Woe to the Quraish! their prey had escaped in spite of their plots and their guards. He could not escape, they thought. He must be hiding somewhere. Abu-Bakr was his best friend. He must be with him. Abu-Jahl ran to Abu-Bakr's house but on searching the house and finding him gone as well, he asked Asmá': "Where is your father?" "I don't know," said the brave girl and Abu-Jahl gave her a sharp slap on the face which made her cry with pain but she revealed nothing.

A great hue and cry was raised. People on foot, on camel-back and on horse-back ran north, east, west and south in search of Muḥammad but came back unsuccessful.

Asmá' used to carry food at night to the two fugitives in the cave.

'Amr who looked after Abu-Bakr's sheep would bring them milk and wipe off all traces of human footsteps to the cave. 'Abdullah bin Abu-Bakr would bring them news of the doings and sayings of the Quraish.

The Quraish reached the mouth of the cave but finding no signs of human beings, or their footprints, they came back, sure in their minds that there was no one inside the cave. The stories about a spider having made its cobweb at the entrance of the cave and pigeons having laid their eggs there and so disarmed the suspicions of the Meccans do not look as if they were genuine in view of the fact that three persons had been visiting the cave supplying news and provisions to the two refugees there.

There is no doubt, however, that the Meccan searchers did reach the cave and Abu-Bakr was afraid of being found out when the Prophet said to him, "Grieve not, surely God is with us." The matter is thus referred to in the Qur-án :

> If you will not help him (Muḥammad),
> Then surely God helped him
> When those who chose disbelief turned him out,
> He being the second of the two
> When they were in the cave
> (And) when he said to his companion

"Grieve not, surely God is with us,"
Then God sent down His calm upon him,
And strengthened him with an army which you saw not,
And He put down the word of those who disbelieved.
And it is the word of God which is (always) high;
For God is Mighty, Wise. (Qur-án, 9 : 40.)

For three days, Muḥammad and Abu-Bakr lived in the cave and for three days the Quraish wandered the earth in grief and sorrow consuming their hearts with their wrath. At an appropriate moment, Abu-Bakr's three special animals laden with provisions reached the foot of the cave and Abu-Bakr took one 'Abdullah bin Urīqaṭ as his guide (each man riding his camel), they set off by a circuitous road towards Medīna first towards the south of Mecca then by way of Tiháma on the coast of the Red Sea. They journeyed by night and rested by day.

The Story of Suráqah

THE Meccans now offered a reward of 100 camels to anyone who would bring back Muḥammad alive or dead. The caravan of the three, however, went on without any accident. At last a man came and gave the Quraish information that he had seen three camels and three riders on such and such a route. Suráqah bin Málik who was present and who coveted the booty of 100 camels told the Quraish that the three persons were not Muḥammad and his party. He himself, however, quickly went home, put on his armour and pursued Muḥammad and his companions on the route mentioned by the informer.

Suráqah came in view of the Prophet somewhere near the present position of Rábigh on the sea-coast. The Prophet and Abu-Bakr were going to make their camels kneel down to rest in the shadow of a rock when they saw his horse which had already stumbled twice very badly. When the Prophet saw him, he prayed "O God! save us from his evil" and Suráqah's horse fell once more throwing the rider under him. Suráqah considered it a bad omen, managed to extricate himself and cried out from a distance "I am Suráqah bin Ju'sham, allow me to speak to you. I swear by God that I will not deceive you nor shall any harm come to you from me." Muḥammad and Abu-Bakr stopped there and waited for him. Abu-Bakr at the command of the Prophet, gave him a writing of protection and Suráqah returned to Mecca promising to turn back all pursuers.

Muḥammad reaches Qubá'

MUHAMMAD and Abu-Bakr lost no time and started on their journey again, going by unfrequented paths and suffering great hardships for lack of water and severity of heat. At last, they reached the territory of Banu Sahm and met their chief Braidah who greeted them with happy greetings. They were now not very far off from Medīna.

The news of Muḥammad's flight had, by this time, reached Medīna's vicinity and people would come out of their houses and wait for his arrival from morning till afternoon.

After full six days' journey he reached Qubá'. This was the eighth day of Rabi'-ul-Awwal (the third month) of the year, about three months after the second pledge of 'Aqaba or Monday, 23rd September, 622 A.C. Muḥammad stopped there till Thursday, or four days including Monday. Here he laid down the foundations of a mosque and on the last day he was met by 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib, who had travelled on foot all the way from Mecca to Medīna walking at nights and hiding by day.

On Friday the twelfth of Rabi'-ul-Awwal, the first year of Hijrat (the commencement of the Muslim Era) the Prophet reached Medīna.

The Prophet led the Friday prayers and this was the first Friday so celebrated. Before this there was no Friday Khuṭba or address. After the prayers, he entered the city. It was a Golden Day for the residents of Yathrib which was from this day called Medīnat un-Nabi (the city of the Prophet) or simply Medīna (the city). The people, irrespective of religion and nationality, welcomed him with open arms amidst thunderous joy. Arabs and Jews vied with one other in welcoming him. He was the promised messenger. "That Messenger", who was going to redeem the nation and lead it to victory, had come. The young women of Medīna mounted their house-tops and sang :

> From the hill-tops of the South.
> The full moon doth arise ;
> With what a lovely call,
> Unto God doth he call.

And we thank him for it all.
O thou sent-one of Raḥmán!
We bow to thy demand.

Crowds now gathered round Muḥammad's camel and the chiefs surrounded him begging him to stop at their places. Muḥammad asked to be excused and threw off the reins of his she-camel on her neck and said that it was under God's guidance; wherever it stopped he would stop. The camel stopped and knelt down at a piece of land belonging to two young men named Sahal and Suhail who were both infants. Muḥammad alighted from his camel. The land was bought through M'ádh bin 'Afrá' and Muḥammad expressed his wish that a mosque should be built on that site, and by the side of the mosque there should be his house, and so it is from that day to this and as long as God please.

CHAPTER X

FIRST TWO YEARS OF HEGIRA

THE BUILDING OF THE PROPHET'S MOSQUE

622, 623 and 624 A.C.

THE Muslims who emigrated from Mecca were called Muhájirīn (Emigrants) and their Medinite Muslims Al-Anṣár or simply Anṣár (Helpers).

With characteristic energy and resolution, Muḥammad began the building of his mosque at Medīna, and whilst it was under construction, he put up in the house of Abu-Ayyūb Khálid bin Zaid Anṣári. He himself worked with his own hands in building the mosque. The mosque was a big court-yard surrounded by stuccoed mud walls and a portion of it was covered with palm-leaves and branches of wood, but the greater part was left open. One side of it was reserved for strangers and travellers who had no home and were hence called *Ahlu-Ṣuffa* or "people of the mats". Muḥammad's own quarters on one side of the mosque were of a similarly unpretentious style and size. There was no light in the mosque except at night-prayers when it was lighted by means of burning straws. When the building was finished the Prophet moved into his quarters.

THE DIFFICULTY OF MUHAMMAD'S TASK AT MEDINA

ABOUT 150 Muslim souls had emigrated from Mecca to

Medīna and out of these, with the exception of Abu-Bakr and 'Othmán bin 'Affán, no one had any means of his own.

The Aus and Khazraj had been exhausted by their war of Bu'áth and those of them who were still pagans were allied to the Jews. The Jews were expecting Muḥammad to accept their faith and help them against the Christians. The Quraish of Mecca were certainly not going to let Muḥammad and his followers have any peace. They who had followed the Muslim emigrants to Abyssinia were not going to sit idle and see Muḥammad prosper at Medīna. Muḥammad had no means of his own—no money, army or armour; no lands or houses; no horses or camels to ride. But he had his God-given courage and the work he did at Medīna is without parallel in the annals of human history. God was his shield, but he was the Prophet-administrator of God and it was for him to defend himself and his followers.

MUHAMMAD AS AN ADMINISTRATOR AND STATESMAN

CIRCUMSTANCES had burdened Muḥammad with a task that had not been put on the shoulders of Noah or Abraham, Moses or Jesus. He had to evolve order out of chaos, strength out of weakness, unity out of dissension and life out of death. Even God Himself acknowledges it to have been "A burden which pressed heavily on thy back." (Qur-án, 94 : 2-3.)

Had Muḥammad not been exceptionally forbearing, gentle, resolute and unswerving, nothing could have been done. There had been many prophets before him and

being sinned against had asked God to punish the sinners. But not so with Muḥammad. He would shoulder the whole burden and carry the message of God to the end of his life.

The nobility of his character and the Golden Rules of his life are laid down in the following verses of the Qur-án and they are the main-springs of his everlasting success.

> Surely there has come to you a messenger from amongst you,
> It is hard on him that you should be in trouble,
> He is most solicitous for your welfare,
> (And) loving, merciful towards the faithful.
>
> (Qur-án, 9 : 128.)

And once again :

> Then, it is due to mercy from God
> That thou art gentle towards them,
> And hadst thou been rough-spoken, hard-hearted,
> They would certainly have scattered away from thy circle,
> Then overlook their faults
> And ask forgiveness for them,
> And consult them in the command,
> But when thou hast determined upon (anything)
> Then rely upon God.
> Surely God loves those who rely (upon Him).
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 158.)

These verses should be learnt by heart by every biographer of Muḥammad and should never be forgotten by the reader. They are the keys of the explanation of all his sayings and doings. Let us put down what is said above very briefly :

(1) It is hard on him that Muslims should be in trouble.
(2) He is most solicitous for their welfare.
(3) He is loving, merciful, overlooking their faults and forgiving; gentle in speech and kind-hearted.
(4) He always consults Muslims in affairs in which he has to give commands.
(5) He then determines what to do and carries it out relying on God.

The following pages are nothing but a commentary of these principles from which Muḥammad never diverged, and, temporary set-backs apart, he always succeeded in all his enterprises.

THE PRACTICAL LESSON OF MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

SAYS God :

> The believers are nothing but a brotherhood, therefore make peace between your brethren, and reverence God that you may be shewn mercy.
> (Qur-án, 49 : 10.)

Islám is a comprehensive religion of human brotherhood and Muḥammad started the foundation of this brotherhood by obliterating all distinctions between Meccans and Medinites, between the Quraish and the Aus or Khazraj. The Muslims were paired into brothers-in-Islám, and he made a roll of brotherhood thus :

(1) Muḥammad and 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib,
(2) Ḥamza (Muḥammad's uncle) and Zaid his emancipated slave,

(3) Abu-Bakr and Khárijah bin Zaid Anṣári,
(4) 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb and 'Utbán bin Málik Khazraji Anṣári,
(5) Abu-'Ubaidah bin Jarraḥ and Sa'd bin M'ádh Anṣári,
(6) Abd ul-Raḥmán bin 'Auf and Sa'd bin Rabi' Anṣári,
(7) Zubair son of 'Auwám and Salmah bin Sulámah,
(8) 'Othmán bin 'Affán and Aus bin Thábit Anṣári,
(9) Ṭalḥá bin 'Ubaidullah and Ka'ab bin Málik,
(10) Mus'ab bin 'Umair and Abu-Ayyūb Anṣári,
(11) 'Ummár bin Yásir and Ḥudhaifah bin Yamán,

and so forth; every Muhájir had an Anṣári brother. This raised the moral prestige of the Anṣár and the material welfare of the Muhájirīn. They loved each other more than brothers because it was a brotherhood for the sake of God and not for the sake of the family. The Anṣár opened their purse-strings and their household stocks and shared them with the Muhájirīn but the latter were not going to be a burden on their hosts. The Meccans knew how to trade and transform the sands of the desert into gold. They soon engaged themselves in trades and occupations and prospered. Others like Abu-Bakr and 'Omar helped in the cultivation of the land and this comity of design and community of action soon made the Muhájirs and the Anṣár get on better than anyone could ever expect.

MUHAMMAD'S TREATY WITH THE JEWS

BUT the Muslims were still a minority at Medīna and unless there was internal peace and security from external invasion, no prosperity could be hoped for Medīna. Muḥammad, therefore, approached the Jews with open arms. He had come to confirm their religion not to belie it. He was sent to the Arabs just as Moses had been sent to the Israelites. This had been revealed to him in one of the earliest chapters of the Meccan period:

> Surely We have sent towards you a messenger, being a witness over you, as We sent a messenger towards Pharaoh. (Qur-án, 73 : 15.)

And Muḥammad was still turning his face in prayers towards Palestine and keeping the same fasts as the Jews. The Jews were also favourably inclined towards Muḥammad. For the welfare, prosperity and liberty of Medīna and for all those who were resident therein, it was necessary that a pact should be drawn up and acted upon without delay before dissensions set in; and under Muḥammad's guidance it was quickly and most equitably drawn up and signed by all parties. It ran as follows:

"That the faithful and the Muslims from amongst the Quraish and Yathrib and all those who follow them and join them and struggle with them are one community distinct from other men, and that each tribe of these will spend its resources in helping Muslims with fairness and justice, and Muslims will help one another, in ransoming their brethren and paying their debts with fairness; and that none of the faithful will be in league without the

other faithful being in it; and that all the faithful will be together against anyone who rebels from amongst them in order to spread injustice, sin, enmity or disturbance amongst the faithful; and that the hands of all of them will be together even though it be against the son of one of them; and that none of the faithful will kill any of the faithful nor help a disbeliever against any of the faithful; and that all will abide by the moral laws of God and that the faithful are the friends of one another as distinct from other men ....

"And that those Jews who follow us (the faithful) are to be helped and consoled without being treated unjustly or being oppressed, and that the Jews will bear the expenses of war with the faithful as long as war lasts; and that the Jews of Banu 'Auf are one community with the faithful; for the Jews their faith and for the Muslims their faith; and the Jews of Banu Najjár, Banu Jusham, Banu Tha'labah, Banu Aus, their allies and intimates are on the same footing as Banu 'Auf; and that the expenses of the Jews (other than war expenses) are on the Jews and of the Muslims upon Muslims; and that the signatories of this Treaty bind to help each other in war and good advice, goodness and mutual friendship amongst themselves without incurring sin; and that the Jews will bear the expenses of war as long as it lasts together with the Muslims; and that the precincts of Yathrib will be sacred for the signatories of this Treaty; and that the neighbour will be looked upon like one's own self, and that no females will be taken away except with the permission of their families; and that

there shall be no rescuing or helping of the Quraish or those who help them (the Quraish) ; and that all will join in helping one another against any attack on Yathrib, and when they are called upon to make peace they will consult one another and inform one another ; and that if anything arises out of this Treaty causing fear of dispute in any of its provisions it shall be referred to God and to Muḥammad, the Messenger of God."

It will be seen that the Treaty is in two parts, the first one refers to the affairs of Muslims only and the second to the joint responsibility of the Jews and Muslims.

In the second part of the Treaty, the Jews are treated exactly in the same way as the Muslims and no distinction is made between the two. But Muḥammad under God's guidance, is their commander.

This treaty was made more than thirteen centuries ago. Is there any example of any prophet or reformer having ever made such a treaty of peace and liberty with the professors of a rival faith? Protection of life, of property, of the modesty of women, of liberty and the guarantees of peace are all included therein.

The Jewish tribes of Banu Quraẓah, Banu Naḍīr and Banu Qainuqa' are not included in this treaty but Muḥammad soon afterwards concluded similar treaties with them and Medīna was assured of peace and prosperity as long as the parties to the treaty remained faithful to its terms.

MUHAMMAD'S EXEMPLARY LIFE

FROM the day of his arrival at Medīna till his final

sickness ten years later, Muḥammad lived a most exemplary life: eating little and wearing rough clothes; receiving, preaching and dictating the Qur-án; doing charity to the poor and the wayfarers; attending the sick and the feeble; serving all men whether Muslims or non-Muslims, and defending his community against incessant attacks made by vituperative tongues, sharp swords and arrows of the enemy.

In addition, he planned, founded and permanently established a new Theocratic State, the like of which never existed before. No man has ever accomplished so much in a single life and no man ever will. The empires of Alexander, Chengez Khan, Napoleon and other world adventurers have been wiped out but the empire of Muḥammad over the hearts of hundreds of millions of human beings and the Law of the Qur-án are still the most Powerful Fact which the world has to reckon with more than 1300 years after Muḥammad's death.

MUHAMMAD'S PRECAUTIONS

THE reader must have noticed that the speeches of 'Abbás, uncle of the Prophet, the Prophet's own query to the Medinites and 'Abbás bin 'Ubádah's speech at the Second Pledge of 'Aqaba made it certain that the Quraish were bent on fighting Muḥammad and his helpers whoever they might be. That idea was confirmed by the plot of the Quraish to kill Muḥammad at Mecca. Now that he had escaped, would they leave him alone? Certainly not. Muḥammad's Treaty with the Jews makes it absolutely clear that an attack on Medīna was then in sight.

It will be shewn later on that he was receiving revelations as to what was happening at Mecca and what was soon going to happen nearer Medīna. It has already been stated that it was hard on Muḥammad that his companions should be in trouble and he was most solicitous for their welfare. Was it consistent with these principles that he should sit down in his house and in his mosque, say his prayers, preach the Qur-án and do nothing else? That is what the Christian biographers of Muḥammad wish him to have done. But Muḥammad was not made of that stuff. Would to God that the Muslims of to-day would learn their lessons from Muḥammad and from what the Qur-án says:

> O ye who believe!
> Take your precautions,
> Then march forth in separate bodies,
> Or march forth all together. (Qur-án, 4 : 71.)

Even when praying under arms, precautions must be taken:

> And they (Muslims going to pray under arms) should take their precautions and their arms;
> Because those who have chosen disbelief wish that in case you should neglect your arms and your necessaries,
> They may, then, fall upon you a sudden falling... ;
> And weaken not in the search of the people...
> (Qur-án, 4 : 102 to 104.)

And again:

> O ye who believe!
> Upon you is the safeguarding of your lives...
> (Qur-án, 5 : 105.)

It is true that all these verses and dozens of others had not yet been revealed. It is, therefore, still more to the credit of Muḥammad that he forestalled them. The fact is that in his Vision he had seen everything. The Qur-án came bit by bit, but his mind had been instructed in all that was necessary. Muḥammad's life is a commentary of the Qur-án.

Recent Muslim biographers of the Prophet say that when Muḥammad emigrated to Medīna he had not received God's permission to fight the Quraish. This confession of weakness on their part is due to the fact that they want to meet the objections of European writers who say that Muḥammad was the aggressor in his wars against the Quraish.

The objection of the Europeans and the apology of Muslim biographers are both beside the mark.

The Meccans tortured and imprisoned the Muslim emigrants, separated husband from wife and mother from her child (as happened in the case of Umm-Salamah); they kept the wealth of Muslims (the whole property of Ṣu'aib Rūmī was confiscated on his emigration to Medīna); they planned the death of the Prophet and fixed a prize of 100 camels for his capture. If this is not a declaration of war on the Muslims what else can be ?

They never made any restitution of confiscated property; they never paid any indemnity for the wrongs they had done; they never asked pardon of Muḥammad for plotting against his life. On the contrary, they wrote to 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy (a Jew) and his allies

amongst the unbelievers of Medīna as follows :—

" You have allowed this person (meaning Muḥammad) to stay at your place. It is now incumbent on you to fight him and banish him from your place. Otherwise we have sworn to attack you suddenly, all together. We will kill your young men and take possession of your women."

How can Muḥammad be an aggressor if he fights these enemies of God and man? The recent Muslim biographers of Muḥammad say that Muḥammad received permission to fight just before the Battle of Badr. The facts are quite eloquent and the Qur-án must not be belied to please the European objectors whose objections are utterly baseless from head to foot.

Even the bitterest enemy biographer of Muḥammad, the writer of the article "Mohammadanism" Vol. 16, of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th edition, page 555, col. 1, says:

" According to Arab notions it was a kind of high treason on his (meaning Muḥammad's) part to leave his native town and join a foreign society; on the part of the people of Medīna it was an act of hostility to Mecca to receive him among them. The Meccans would have been fully justified on their side to take arms against the Moslems...It was the Moslems who took the initiative."

The friends of the Meccans would have been pleased if Muḥammad and his little band of Muslims had been killed and nothing more heard of them. They would like to blow out Islám with their mouths (verbal vilifications) but God will perfect it in spite of them. The first question to be answered is: " When was permission given to

Muslims to fight the Meccans?" The verse of the Qur-án which refers to this matter is as follows:

> Permission (to fight) is given to those against whom war has been declared,
> Because they have been wronged.
> And most surely God is capable of helping them:
> Those who have been expelled from their homes without just cause,
> (Solely) because they say:
> "Our Lord is God". (Qur-án, 22 : 39.)

This Chapter, No. 22, is a Meccan Sura and was revealed before the emigration to Medīna took place. There is no evidence that this particular verse was revealed at Medīna more than a year after the Emigration. The Muslim writers who casually try to make us believe that this verse was revealed immediately before the Battle of Badr are playing into the hands of lying objectors. The verse is quite clear. War had been declared on Muslims, it says, and they had been oppressed and expelled simply because they believed in One God and said "God is our Lord."

On the other hand says God:

> Will you not fight a people who have broken their oaths
> And they resolved to turn out the messenger,
> And they began (the fight) the first time?
> Are you afraid of them...? (Qur-án, 9 : 13.)

The fact is that Muḥammad had God's permission to fight the Meccans and he was getting ready for it but he would not and did not invade Mecca. He let the Meccans go to Badr.

Maulvi Muḥammad 'Alī's note in his translation of the Qur-án on verse 39 of Chapter 22 giving permission to Muslims to fight says:

"According to authentic reports, this is the earliest permission given to the Muslims to fight. There is nothing to show that this verse was not revealed at Mecca. It was owing to this revelation that in the well-known oath of allegiance taken at 'Aqaba the Holy Prophet required a promise from the Medīna deputation that they would defend him against his enemies even as they would defend their children."

Muḥammad knew very well that the Quraish would fight him but when and where he did not know. He was, therefore, bound, a good general as he was, to send out reconnoitring parties to keep an eye on the movement of Meccans.

MUHAMMAD'S RECONNOITRING EXPEDITIONS: 1 A. H.

The First Expedition of 30 men under Hamza

MUHAMMAD had to find out what the Quraish were doing, so he sent 30 riders under his uncle Ḥamza towards the Red Sea (the route taken by the Meccans to Syria) to see if they were not really going to attack Medīna. Near Al-'Īṣ, a place on the sea-coast, Ḥamza found a caravan of 300 riders under Abu-Jahl. No fighting took place, and Ḥamza returned safely.

The Second Party of 60 riders

BUT the Meccans might be attacking Medīna by another route, so a second party of 60 riders (all Muhájirīn as in

the first party) were sent under 'Ubaida bin Ḥárith towards Rábigh. They met with a caravan of 200 riders under Abu-Sufyán. No fighting took place and each party went its way.

In war, as well as in all games, it is the business of the leader to confound the enemy's plans. And the Meccans were confounded. Muḥammad was so soon sending out expeditions. Surely, they thought, he must have an enormous army of Medinites behind his back.

To make the plans of the Meccans still more confounded, Muḥammad sent another small expedition of 18 to 20 riders under Sa'd bin Abi-Waqáṣ towards the south. They also returned without any fighting having taken place.

RECONNOITRING EXPEDITIONS: 2 A.H. = 623 A.C.

THE first year of the Hegira thus closed without a single life having been lost on either side. It is quite apparent by the small number of men sent out by Muḥammad, *viz.* 30, 60 and 20 that he did not mean to fight the Meccans. Those European writers who assert that these expeditions were sent to loot the caravans are also wrong because no loot took place. The expeditions were merely informatory. Muḥammad wanted to take precautions as God wished him to do. He had the permission to fight, and it does not require a Divine order to fight those who are after your life. The Meccans had declared war on him and they never complained of Muḥammad's expeditions. How could they? The question may be asked "Why did not the Meccans invade Medīna in the First Year of the

Hegira?" The answer to this is that they were terrified by the extraordinary success of Muḥammad at Medīna—by his unifying Muhájirīn and the Anṣár, in one brotherhood; by his Treaty with the Jews and by his readiness to catch them if they came near him. They were no match for the genius of Muḥammad.

MUHAMMAD HIMSELF AT THE HEAD OF EXPEDITIONS: 2 A.H.

THE first year of Hegira consisted of nine and a half months only, as it commenced in Rabī'-ul-Awwal, the third month of the year. In the twelfth month of his Emigration or the second month of the Second Year of the Hegira, Muḥammad headed an expedition himself but he made Sa'd bin 'Ubáda its chief. He went towards Ghazwat-ul-Abwá till he reached Waddan trying to find out the Quraish and Banu Ḍamrah. He did not find the Quraish but Banu Ḍamrah made an alliance with him.

He thus consolidated his position, and after a month, he again set out towards Būwáṭ at the head of 200 Muhájirīn and Anṣár all together. The fact that the Anṣár were with him proves most conclusively that it was not a military expedition, for, the first time he asked the Anṣár to fight with him was at Badr, as will appear later. A caravan under Ummayyah bin Khalaf was reported to be on its way to Syria but it did not meet Muḥammad. It avoided him and Muḥammad did not pursue it. Apparently Muḥammad was getting news or revelations of caravans setting out from Mecca towards Medīna. How was he to know whether they were trade

caravans for Syria or military forces meant for the invasion of Medina?

The only way was to find it out by sending parties of his men who got the necessary information so that Medīna might not be taken by surprise. If he had sat down with a rosary in his hand he would certainly have been attacked as the Meccans said "suddenly by us all together." After another two or three months he took or sent another expedition towards Yanbo' under Abu-Salmah bin Abul-As'ad. They were there at the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth month of the Second Year of Hegira (October 623 A.C.) getting information about a caravan under Abu-Sufyán. Abu-Sufyán avoided them and they did not pursue him and returned to Medīna. In these expeditions, Muḥammad had succeeded in making alliances with Banu Ḥamza, Banu Mudlij and the people of Būwáṭ.

It must not be forgotten that the Muslims did not kill a single person of the Meccans in all these expeditions nor did they take a single animal or a single *dirham* from the Meccans. They went there to get information and to establish their prestige and for nothing else. If the Quraish had met them and discussed matters amicably, Muḥammad would have made peace with them on honourable terms just as he had done with the Jews and just as he did with the Meccans, five years later, at Ḥudaibiya when he was powerful enough to crush them. Muḥammad was ready to fight but he was readier still to make peace. The leaders of the Quraish would not make peace. On the contrary, twenty days after his return from the last expedition

Kurz bin Jábir of the Meccans came with a party of the Quraish near Medīna and took away a large number of camels and sheep of the Medīnites. According to the Meccans and their friend, the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, they had every right to do so whilst Muḥammad had no right to take the initiative or else he was the aggressor. But who was the aggressor? Certainly the Quraish, both before and after the Emigration.

The Prophet set out in pursuit of Kurz, the looter, and put Zaid bin Ḥárith at the head of Medīna in his absence, but Kurz escaped *via* Badr.

The facts as above stated are undeniable and the Meccan chiefs are solely responsible for all that followed.

The looting expedition of Kurz bin Jábir had clinched the issues. There could be no going back on them. In this Second Year of Hegira in the month of Rajab (seventh of the year) Muḥammad sent a number of Muhájirīn under 'Abdullah bin Jaḥsh of the tribe of As'ad and gave him a sealed letter which was not to be opened till two days after his departure. He went where he was told to go and on opening the letter he read: "When thou seest what is in this letter then go on to Nakhlá between Mecca and Ṭá'if and observe the Quraish and let us know the news."

THE DEATH OF 'OMAR BIN HADRAMI : 2 A.H. = 623 A.C.

'ABDULLAH read it and informed his companions who all agreed to it. They all left without stopping as the order was to go on (and not to stop). Two of their companions, Sa'd bin Waqqáṣ Zuhri and 'Utba bin Ghazwán, who

had gone in search of their camels were left behind and they were both caught by the Quraish. At Nakhlá the Muslims met a caravan of the Quraish under 'Omar bin Ḥaḍrami. This was the last day of Rajab (one of the holy months). Sa'd on his own responsibility and after consulting his companions interrupted the caravan. Someone shot an arrow which killed 'Omar bin Ḥaḍrami and the Muslims took two prisoners whom they brought to Medīna.

THE PROPHET IN A DIFFICULT POSITION AND GOD'S DECISION WITH REGARD TO NAKHLA EXPEDITION: 2 A. H = 623 A. C.

WHEN the Prophet saw what had happened he told Sa'd and his companions, "I did not order you to fight in the sacred month." He refused to take any part of the booty or to give it to the Muslims. He waited for the decision of God. The Meccans raised a great cry against Muḥammad; and their conspirators amongst the Quraish in Medīna also attempted to blaze up a big war against Muḥammad for his having allowed fighting in the sacred month of Rajab. Muḥammad prayed to God for guidance and it came.

Says God:

> They ask thee concerning the holy month—
> (As to) fighting therein.
> Say, "Fighting therein is a serious matter."
> But hindering men from God's way,
> And disbelieving in Him,
> And (hindering them) from the holy mosque,
> And turning out its people therefrom

Are more serious with God;
And persecution (in faith) is more serious than war.
And they will not cease fighting with you
Till they turn you back from your faith
If they can... (Qur-án, 2 : 217.)

Exchange of Prisoners

THE Muslims were overjoyed at this revelation and the Prophet exchanged Sa'd bin Waqqáṣ and 'Utba bin Ghazwán for the two Meccans captured by his men. One of these Hákam bin Kaisán became a Muslim and remained at Medīna.

THE HAPPENINGS AT MEDINA FROM EMIGRATION TO RAJAB : 7TH MONTH OF THE 2ND YEAR OF HEGIRA

THE sequence of events made it necessary that the expeditions of the Prophet be given in a series without break but that was only a very small, one might say an extremely small, part of Muḥammad's work at Medīna during the first seventeen months. Whilst he was still living at Abu-Ayyūb's house, he sent Zaid bin Ḥárith and Abu-Rafi' to bring his daughters Faṭimah and Um-Kulthūm, his wife Saudah bint Zam'ah, and Usáma bin Zaid. 'Abdullah bin Abu-Bakr, his companions and Ṭalḥa bin 'Ubaidullah also came with them.

The Prophet's new house near the recently built mosque was ready and he removed to it about the end of the First Year of Hegira with his females.

The Prophet takes 'Áishah as his wife

IT has already been mentioned that 'Áishah bint Abu-Bakr

was engaged to the Prophet before his emigration to Mecca. She had come to Medīna with her brother. The marriage was now formally celebrated and 'Áishah entered his home. 'Áishah was brought up in comparative luxury and was fond of her play-things. But she was the most intelligent girl in Mecca or Medīna and from all accounts she must have been very beautiful. Muḥammad loved her most tenderly and she was to him like a second angel. Her memory and her faculties of judgment must have been extraordinary. But for her, almost half the events of Muḥammad's private life would be missing. She ranks next only to Khadījah in the history of Islám, and in some ways she is almost indispensable. No historian of Islám can do his work without bowing to the service she has done to Muslims for all time to come. In matters of Islamic practice and procedure her sayings from the Prophet are absolutely unique.

Alms and Fasting

It is also during this period that the greater portion of the 2nd Chapter of the Qur-án was revealed in which amongst other important things are the obligatory keeping of the 29 or 30 days' fast in the month of Ramaḍán and the payment of the stated alms. The quantum of alms is not fixed in the Qur-án but it was fixed by the Prophet at 2½ per cent. of the net annual income of each person above a fixed income. (The details of these and other religious duties must be left over to be dealt with by theologians.) The Ḥajj was already an institution of Abraham and the Qur-án confirmed it and made 'Arafát the final stage of Ḥajj instead of Miná.

The Adhán or Call to Prayer

THE five prayers, it has already been stated, were fixed from the day of Muḥammad's Mi'ráj. These prayers became a regular institution at Medīna. At Mecca, there was a great deal of interruption by the Quraish and it was difficult to form a congregation without the Quraish starting a persecution. At Medīna, the congregations were comparatively large and it became necessary that the faithful should have some kind of call to prayer. Someone suggested the trumpet-call as was done by the Jews. Another proposed the ringing of bells as was done by the Christians. But both these forms were displeasing to the Muslims.

After a good deal of consultation, Muḥammad fixed upon the Verbal Call as the best of all, and Bilál was instructed to call the faithful to prayer. There was a house belonging to a woman of Banu Najjár next to the mosque and Bilál ascended the top of this house before each prayer and called :

> " God is Great, God is Great, God is Great, God is Great.
> I bear witness that there is no deity but God (Allah).
> I bear witness that there is no deity but God ;
> I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God,
> I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God.

Come to (or be alive to) Prayers
Come to (or be alive to) Prayers ;
Come to (or be alive to) Spiritual Success.
Come to (or be alive to) Spiritual Success.
God is Great, God is Great,
There is no deity but God."

This simple, melodious and charming call sums up Islám in a few sweet sentences and is the spiritual food of all Muslims in all the four corners of the earth. If Muḥammad had done nothing more than institute this call and the prayer he would have become immortal but his fame rests on a thousand equally grand achievements.

Muhammad and 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy

JUST about the time of the arrival of Muḥammad at Medīna, the unbelievers amongst the Aus and Khazraj who had both suffered heavily in the Battle of Bu'áth were intending to make 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy (the Jewish leader of Medina) their king. A crown of gold had been made and everything got ready for the coronation of 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy but the arrival of Muḥammad and his marvellous activity put these things in abeyance.

The Quraish sent their epistle to 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy calling upon the Medinites to fight Muḥammad and banish him or else be prepared for the sudden and merciless onslaught of the Quraish on Medīna. "We have sworn to kill your young men and take possession of your women," was the resolution of the Meccans

presented at a meeting of the Jews and others under the presidentship of 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy. It was a grand chance for 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy to assert himself. But God was with the Prophet who got wind of this meeting and boldly walked into the assembly and addressed them thus:

"O ye people! the Meccans are trying to deceive you. If you are taken in by their threats you will be ruined. You will be killing your own kith and kin in Medīna (meaning the Muslims) and when you are weak they will over-power you and plunder you. It is better that we should all fight them jointly as we have agreed with the Jews. Tell the emissary of the Meccans that we are not afraid of them."

Before 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy could put in a word the whole assembly unanimously approved of this proposal with great joy. The Medinites were as much of a fighting race as the Meccans if not more so. The assembly then dispersed. Bin Ubbayy said nothing but in his heart he was greatly disturbed and was bent on carrying out his secret plans.

Conversion of 'Abdullah bin Salám and Salmán the Persian

SALMAN the Persian embraced Islám in the First Year of the Hegira. As to the Jews they had welcomed Muḥammad and made an alliance with him to take advantage of his influence and power and to use him as their tool. But God's Will was working otherwise. One of their learned men and priests named 'Abdullah bin Salám embraced Islám together with the whole of his

family. Before the Jews became aware of this fact, 'Abdullah bin Salám (who himself remained concealed) had them sent for in the presence of the Prophet and had them questioned thus:

"What is the position of 'Abdullah bin Salám amongst you?"

The Jews replied: "He is a nobleman and the son of a nobleman, a priest and a learned man amongst us."

'Abdullah bin Salám then came out of concealment and told them what he had done and called them to Islám. The Jews did not relish this and began to make secret plans against Muḥammad, and to annoy him by their verbal disputations as they had done Jesus six centuries before. History was repeating itself. To warn the Jews and to inform the Muslims, God revealed the 2nd Chapter of the Qur-án. In verses 40 to 46 of this chapter God reminds the Jews of His past favours and asks them to fulfil their covenant with God and He will fulfil His. In this there is a reference to the Covenant they made with God through Moses and also the covenant they made with Muḥammad. God then orders them to believe in the Qur-án which has come to confirm their sacred book and be not the first to disbelieve therein, and sell the word of God for a mean price by combining with the unbelievers. God orders them to keep up their prayers and pay the stated alms and pray with those who pray to God. "Do you command men (meaning unbelieving Arabs) to be pious, and forget your own souls?"

But God knew what was in their hearts; and

Muḥammad and the Muslims are forewarned as to what they will do. The Jews determined to play a double rôle. They professed to be the friends of Muḥammad but they were in league with the unbelievers, and their whole object from this day was to exile Muḥammad from Medīna as he had been exiled from Mecca. They called upon the Prophet to go to Jerusalem and make Medīna a midway home between Mecca and Jerusalem. "Jerusalem was the home of the Prophets and more fitting for Muḥammad than either Mecca or Medīna," they said.

Muḥammad saw through their stratagem, and soon God's command came to change the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to the Ka'ba. This gave further offence to the Jews and they became a perfect nuisance to Muḥammad and the Muslims whilst secret communications were going on betwixt them and the Meccans.

A DEPUTATION OF THE CHRISTIANS OF NAJRAN TO MEDINA

ABOUT this time a deputation of the Christians of Najrán consisting of about 60 riders came to Medīna. There were amongst them some men of learning and of noble birth. Their real intention was to increase the enmity between the Jews and the Muslims and to bring it to the point of war.

Muḥammad welcomed them right royally and served them in person, allowing them to pray as they liked and do as they pleased. Religious discussions also took place between the three religions—Islám, Christianity and Judaism. The Jews denying the Christians and the Christians

denying the Jews and both wrangling without any real faith in God.

> And say the Jews,
> "On nought be the Christians";
> And say the Christians,
> "On nought be the Jews"—
> And they (all) read the Book... (Qur-án, 2 : 113.)

When both sides asked Muḥammad as to what he believed he said:

> Say ye:
> "We believe in God,
> And what has been sent down to us,
> And what was sent down to
> Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac
> And Jacob and his children,
> And what was given to
> Moses and Jesus,
> And what was given to the prophets from their Lord;
> We separate not one from the rest of them,
> And we be obedient to (*i.e.*, we be Muslims)."
>
> (Qur-án, 2 : 136.)

The whole matter between Judaism, Christianity and Islám is discussed in verses 113 to 141 of the Second Chapter of the Qur-án. Islám is the religion of all the prophets of God but the Christians and Jews would not agree to this. They would only believe what was sent down to them and disbelieve in what is sent down to others.

WORLDLINESS PREVENTS DISBELIEVERS FROM BELIEVING IN ISLAM

NOTHING prevents disbelievers from believing in Islám except their worldliness. They are afraid that by doing

so they would lose their position of superiority which they think belongs to them. Islám is a religion in which all men become equal before God. The rich and the poor, the noble in birth and the meanest of the mean start on an equal footing; and " he alone is the noblest in the sight of God who is the most pious amongst you." (Qur-án 49 : 13.)

Emperors, kings, commanders, priests, feudatory lords and others who have acquired a special position amongst their fellow beings are instinctively against Islám—priests especially. But for the guardians of the deities of Mecca, the Quraish would have joined the faith of Islám long before they did. This is proved by the fact that when the opposition of the chiefs broke down, the people embraced Islám in large numbers as will be shewn in later chapters. But at the time we are speaking of, all three parties—the unbelievers amongst the Arabs, the Jews and the Christians—were unwilling to acknowledge Muḥammad. By believing in him they thought they would lose their hereditary rights, privileges and power over the populace. The Christian deputation left without any result. It was apparent to everyone, however, that the Jews were at heart Muḥammad's enemies.

PREPARATIONS OF WAR BETWEEN THE QURAISH AND THE MUSLIMS

It has already been stated that Kurz bin Jábir looted the camels and sheep of the Medínites and was not caught. Muḥammad realised the seriousness of his position. The

Jews were intriguing against him; the Meccans had declared war on him and the caravan which in October 623 had gone to Syria under Abu-Sufyán would soon be back to Mecca when the Quraish having made a profitable commerce and gathered together all their resources would fall on him with all their might and the Jews would rebel against him at Medīna. He had his revelation from God and must act before any such emergency arose. *In all his enterprises he forestalled his enemies and confounded their plans.* He began to act immediately. He made preparations to threaten the safe return of Abu-Sufyán's caravan to Mecca. He did not mean to capture the caravan, but his coming out was a threat to it, all the same. Those who deny this to Muḥammad for fear of the Christian critics are giving little credit to Muḥammad as a general and are flying in the face of the Qur-án.

Muḥammad's move to intercept the caravan was a first class military manœuvre. The caravan contained commerce worth 50,000 *dīnárs* and not a single family of the Meccans was unrepresented in its venture. The Meccans would be forced to divide their army—half to protect the caravan and half to fight Muḥammad—if they wanted to fight. Or else they might see the folly of their opposition to Muḥammad and make peace with him. Muḥammad was always ready to make peace with his Meccan brethren but he was not prepared to sacrifice his faith or desert his followers.

MUHAMMAD'S PLANS TO CONFOUND THE QURAISH

In order to carry out his plan, Muḥammad sent Ṭalḥa bin

'Ubaidullah and Sa'īd bin Zaid to bring news of the return of Abu-Sufyán's caravan from Syria. They went and stopped with Juhanni in Al-Haurá (north-east of Medīna on the coast nearly 100 miles away from Medīna) and when the caravan came near they made haste to acquaint Muḥammad.

When Abu-Sufyán reached Al-Haurá he questioned Juhanni about any emissaries of Muḥammad but Juhanni would not reveal anything. Abu-Sufyán, however, was an astute man and either then, or before that time, sent one Ḍamḍam bin 'Amr of the tribe of Ghifár to Mecca for the protection of the caravan. Most probably he had long before this day learnt of Muḥammad's going to the valley of Yanbo' in October 623 and despatched his man for help.

Anyway, Ḍamḍam reached Mecca in double quick time, cut the ears, nose and other parts of his camel so as to make it bleed, tore off his own shirt both front and behind and cried:

"O ye Quraish! Your property with Abu-Sufyán! Muḥammad and his companions are in its way. I did not see them capture it. Help! Help!"

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF BADR

THE PREPARATIONS OF THE QURAISH TO CRUSH MUHAMMAD : 2 A.H.

AS soon as Abu-Jahl heard this, he called the people to the Ka'ba to get ready for the march. Abu-Jahl was a man who had his face, tongue and eyes as if they were made of iron and none of the Quraish dare disobey him. But even then the people were divided. They were afraid of being attacked by Banu Bakr from behind on account of their old enmity of the unholy war or Ḥarb ul-Fijár already described in Chapter III. But Málik bin Ju'shum Mudleji stood surety for this and all the leaders of the Quraish set out to crush Muḥammad. Abu-Lahab, who could not go, sent 'Áṣ bin Hishám bin Mughīrah in his place. Umayyah bin Khalaf was going to stay behind but Abu-Jahl forced him to go by calling him "a woman who should put *kuḥl* (or antimony) in her eyes." So that not a single man of any worth who could bear arms remained in Mecca.

The Quraish Force at Badr

THE Quraish force when it started from Mecca consisted of full 1000 soldiers : 700 riders on camel and 300 on horseback. They were all fully armed and provided with shields, armour, arrows, swords and other implements of war. Thirteen men were appointed to feed this army

and hundreds of camels were taken with the army for carrying provisions and also to serve as food for the army itself as it had to go a long way.

Excepting Abu-Sufyán, all the leaders who had conspired against Muḥammad's life at Mecca were present. This army reached Badr where it received the news of the escape of Abu-Sufyán's caravan from Syria on its journey back to Mecca and Abu-Sufyán sent a messenger saying that God had saved his caravan from the hands of Muḥammad and it was not necessary for the warriors to go to Medīna. A few of the Quraish went back to Mecca.

But Abu-Jahl refused to go back. "By God," he said, "we will not return. We will camp at Badr and stay there for three days. We will slaughter camels, feast and drink and musicians will sing to us. And all the Arabs will hear of our exploits, our great gathering and they will ever after be afraid of us."

Badr was one of the Arab desert markets and Abu-Jahl wanted to make history so that the Arab poets may sing songs of his great gallantry as a champion of the Quraish. Hence, this great force of the Quraish went on till they encamped on the further side of the valley of Badr (*i.e.* the side further away from Medīna).

Muḥammad and his little band of 300 men

RECENT Muslim biographers of Muḥammad say that only after Muḥammad had heard of Abu-Jahl's military force, did he come out of Medīna (after consulting the Muhájirīn) to fight the Quraish ; in other words, that he came out to

fight and not to intercept the caravan from Syria. It has been [stated above that Muḥammad did not intend to intercept the caravan. He knew that he would have to fight the Quraish but the force which set out with him from Medīna did not come out to fight the Quraish but ostensibly to intercept the caravan. The game of war is a game of confounding the enemy.

When Muḥammad set out of Medīna he had only 312 or 313 souls with him. He had 70 camels and two horses. Each camel carried three men and only a few men possessed armour. The rest had only swords to fight with. After sending back boys and incapable men, Muḥammad had only 305 or 307 men left with him. Out of these, 83 were Muhájirīn, 61 men of the Aus and the rest of the Khazraj. They reached the valley of Dhafirán when they heard of Abu-Jahl's army.

Return of Muḥammad to Medina

HERE was a new situation. It was one thing to meet a caravan with a comparatively small number of armed men and another to have to meet the whole host of armed Meccans. Muḥammad always consulted his companions and the desert was no place for such a consultation, so he returned to his starting point near Medīna. (It is always the custom of an Arab caravan to fix its starting stage outside the town at some distance from it and not in the town itself for the very obvious reason that towns lack open spaces.) When he returned to Medīna, the Quraish and the Jews both became bold. "Away with Muḥammad" was now their open secret. "Turn him out of Medīna as

the Quraish turned him out of Mecca and be rid of his new religion" was their concerted plot. But Muḥammad had received God's order, and as usual before deciding on any command he consulted his people and they were told exactly what the position was.

Abu-Bakr and 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb were with him for fighting but he said: "Give me your opinions" addressing the people generally.

Miqdád bin 'Amr got up and said :

"O Prophet of God ! march on as God guideth thee, for we are with thee. By God, we will not say to thee as the Israelites said 'Go thou and thy Lord and fight them and we will sit here'. But we are with thee and thy Lord, fight them, we will fight with thee and thy Lord."

The people became silent. The Prophet again said : "Give me your counsel, O ye people!"

He was now referring to the Medinites who had promised to defend him as they would defend their women and children, but they had not bound themselves to go out with him, and that was why he had come back to Medīna. The Anṣár understood what he meant and Sa'd bin Mu'ádh got up and addressing the Prophet said :

"Is it us you are referring to, O Prophet of God ?"

He said : "Yes."

Replied Sa'd : "We have believed in thee and confirmed thy truth and we bear witness that what thou hast been given (the Qur-án) is the Truth. And on this we have given thee our binding promise to hear and to obey. March on as thou intendest for we are with thee. By Him who has sent thee with the truth, if thou ask us

to wade through the sea we will wade through with thee, and not one man of us will stay behind, and we are agreeable to whatever may happen to us on the morrow at the hands of our enemies, for we are patient in war and truthful in our company. Perhaps God will show thee from us what will please thee. By the grace of God, march on with us."

Sa'd had hardly finished his speech when the Prophet's face brightened with joy and his whole being was filled with happiness. A moment like that was worth a life's labour.

"March on," he said, "and be glad that God has promised me one of the two parties" (*i.e.* either Abu-Sufyán's caravan or victory over Abu-Jahl's army). Even at this moment the Muslims did not know that Abu-Sufyán would escape them.

Muḥammad marches to Badr : Ramaḍán, 2 A.H.

MUHAMMAD re-commenced his march and sent 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib, Zubair bin 'Awwám and Sa'd bin Abī Waqqáṣ to bring news of the enemy. They brought him two boys who had seen the enemy force. They were questioned as to the number of the enemy but they could not say how many.

"How many camels do they slaughter each day?" asked Muḥammad.

"Nine one day, and ten the other" was their reply. Muḥammad concluded from this that there were between 900 and 1000 Quraish in the army. He also learnt from the two boys that the chiefs of the Quraish were bent on

fighting him. Muḥammad said to his people: "Mecca has thrown to you the treasures of her very heart and liver."

Abu-Sufyán Escapes

Two other Muslims went to the watering place of Badr and learnt from two girls that Abu-Sufyán's caravan would be there on the morrow. The two Muslims had knelt their camels on a mound near the water whilst they were getting this information which they brought to Muḥammad.

But Abu-Sufyán was not to be caught so easily. Leaving his caravan behind, he advanced to Badr in person and asked the keeper of the water named Majdī "Have you seen anyone?" Majdī replied: "Two persons had their camels kneeling on this mound." Abu-Sufyán examined the excreta of the camels and found in it remains of fodder peculiar to Medīna. He rushed back and took his caravan further away to the sea-coast and escaped all possible pursuit. It was then that he sent the news of his escape to Abu-Jahl (not after reaching Mecca as some biographers say).

The Muslims were still expecting to meet Abu-Sufyán and they would have been just in time but for Abu-Sufyán's foresight, precaution and wisdom.

On the morrow, the Muslims learnt that Abu-Sufyán was beyond pursuit. There was nothing left for the Muslims but to fight the army of the Quraish. The thing had been pre-determined by God and Muḥammad knew it. The Muslims knew it only when they were there. This is made quite clear in the Qur-án. The Battle of Badr was fought according to God's Will. Neither side could

escape it. Says God:

> And when God held out to you that one of the two parties would be surely yours,
> And you wished to have that for yours which was without a sting in it,
> And God wished that the truth be fulfilled by means of His word
> And that the last of the unbelievers be cut off.
> In order that the truth be established and that falsehood be nullified,
> The dislike of the guilty notwithstanding.
>
> (Qur-án, 8 : 7-8.)

The first nineteen verses of the Eighth Chapter refer to the Battle of Badr and those who will refer to them will find out for themselves that in spite of the zeal of Abu-Bakr, 'Omar, Miqdád and Sa'd, there were many who were not quite so earnest as they, and that Muḥammad had really a most difficult work to win this battle. For instance, verses 42, 43 and 44 of this very chapter are most eloquent as to the real position of the parties. They are worth careful study. Says God:

> Remember when you were on the nearer bank of the valley
>
> And they were on the farther bank,
> And the caravan was below you... (Qur-án, 8 : 42.)

These lines show most clearly that the Muslims, the army of the Quraish and Abu-Sufyán's caravan were at one time all close to each other. God continues:

> And had you been there by appointment you would surely have broken the appointment,
> But (it was so) that God might carry out what was to

be done,

In order that he who chose to perish might perish with clear proofs (before him)

And he who chose to live might live with clear proofs (before him)...... (Qur-án, 8 : 42.)

It is quite clear from what has been said above that the Battle of Badr was by the Will of God; that the Muslims set forth wishing to overtake Abu-Sufyán but that God Himself did not wish them to do that. It was God's Will that the issue between Islám and Disbelief be decided once for ever in the Second Year of the Hegira and it was.

Glory be to God for His Mercy and all honour to Muḥammad for his generalship and for his winning the hearts of the Muslims before conquering his enemies.

THE BATTLE OF BADR, ITS CONSEQUENCES AND OTHER EVENTS OF THE 2ND YEAR OF THE HEGIRA

On the day of discrimination, namely, the day the two armies met... (Qur-án, 8 : 41.)

THE day of the Battle of Badr (about 14th January 624 A. C.) is the most distinctive and decisive day in the history of Islám. If the Muslims had lost the battle that day they would not have survived the onslaughts of the disbelievers and the Jews; and Islám might have either disappeared from the surface of the earth or been put back for hundreds of years.

The fulfilment of Muḥammad's prophecy that Muslims would be victorious on that day is a direct proof

of his mission. He had told his followers that God had promised him one of the two parties—either Abu-Sufyán's caravan or Abu-Jahl's army. Now that Abu-Sufyán had escaped, there remained Abu-Jahl and his force for God's promise to be fulfilled.

The Encampment of Muslims at Badr

THE Muslims hurried towards Badr and when they came near the well of Badr (Badr itself is the name of the well) Muḥammad descended from his camel and when Ḥubáb bin Mundhir bin Jamū' who was an expert in the art of war, saw the Prophet alight, he said:

"O Prophet of God! this place upon which God has caused thee to set thy foot is the place for us. We will neither go forward nor backward. What sayest thou? Is this position good from the point of view of fighting and planning a defence?"

Muḥammad replied, "Yes, it is."

Then at Ḥubáb's suggestion and with the approval of the Prophet, they dug a tank in which they collected all the rain water which had just fallen. They also constructed a *hut* for the Prophet to be at his ease, and from which to give directions of war and in which to pray.

The Love of Muslims for Muḥammad at Badr

THE Muslims saw that their last day had come. The unbelievers were three to one against them in numbers and more than twenty to one in armour. For the Muslims to get back alive from this battle did not seem to be

possible. They would all die there that day and kill as many disbelievers as they could. But no harm must come to the Prophet. In case the worst came to the worst, they intended to guard him and to rescue him alive. Abu-Bakr, his chief minister, was left with him in the hut as his guard.

The Quraish who were on higher ground, took up their positions, and when they saw the paltry band of 300 down below, with no shelter and no place of rescue they were exceedingly glad. The day of days had come. Muḥammad could not escape them now. They had him in the hollow of their hands. Let him call his Lord, God, to save him and his companions.

Muḥammad's Love for the Muslims at Badr

MUHAMMAD arranged his men in battle lines but when he saw the paucity of their numbers and the poverty of their means, his heart almost sank within him. God, however, Who was with him and Abu-Bakr in the cave of Mount Thaur, was with them now. The two of them went to the hut. Muḥammad turned towards the Ka'ba and bowed down before God. His mind and soul were absorbed in the Soul of God. He beseeched God to forgive the sins of his followers, he prayed for the fulfilment of His promise and he supplicated God for His help. He wound up his prayers in these words :

"O God! these Quraish have come with their friends to belie Thy messenger,

"O God! we need Thy help which Thou hast promised.

"O God! should this small band of ours perish, there would be none left to worship Thee."

He repeated this so often and so earnestly that he did not know where he was. His mantle fell off his person and Abu-Bakr had to cover his shoulders and said to him, "God has listened to thy prayer and He will fulfil His promise."

But Muḥammad continued in his supplications and calling upon God for help. He humbled himself before God as he alone could. The man who had risen to the highest of the high heavens in his Mi'ráj was now weeping and crying with his face on the dust. "Neither our numbers nor our strength is of any use. Thy help alone can save us." A slight nap overtook him in which he received God's answer to his prayers. He got up, happy, came out to his men, persuaded them to fight and said:

"By Him in Whose hands is Muḥammad's soul, everyone of you who fights them to-day and is killed whilst persevering in fight, watching and facing the enemy and not turning his back on him will most certainly have paradise for reward."

The men were electrified. They saw paradise before their eyes. The 1000 of the enemy looked fewer than themselves. Each Muslim was the equivalent of two disbelievers, nay of ten,

> O thou Prophet!
> Urge the faithful to fighting.
> If there be of you twenty persevering men they will overcome two hundred,
> And if there be of you a hundred, they will overcome one thousand of those who disbelieve...
>
> (Qur-án, 8 : 65.)

The Prophet urged them to fight and the faithful responded with one heart. They did not fight to live: they fought to die and they lived.

The description of the Battle of Badr :
2 A. H.=624 A.C.

MUHAMMAD had given strict orders that the Muslims were not to be the first to attack, as he did in all his subsequent wars but the Quraish were impatient. Abu-Jahl invited 'Ámir Ḥaḍramī, brother of 'Omar Ḥaḍramī who had been killed by a Muslim's arrow some two months before at Nakhlá, to call upon the Quraish to revenge his brother's killing. 'Ámir stood up and cried "Wa 'Omarah, Wa 'Omarah" invoking vengeance for the death of his brother 'Omar. Then Aswad bin 'Abd ul-As'ad Makhzūmī advanced to break down the water supply of the Muslims. But Ḥamzah, the Lion of Islám, soon finished him before he could do any damage. Then 'Utbah and Shaibah, sons of Rabi'ah, together with 'Utbah's son Walīd, came forward and challenged the Muslims to single combat. Three young men of Medīna went forward and offered themselves, but the Meccans would not fight them.

"O Muḥammad!" they cried, "send us our peers out of our own people."

Muḥammad ordered Ḥamzah his uncle against Shaibah, 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib against Walīd and 'Ubaidah bin Ḥárith against 'Utbah.

Ḥamzah and 'Alī killed their opponents in no time and then 'Alī, the Lion of God, went and finished off

'Utbah who had wounded 'Ubaidah bin Ḥárith and was swaggering of his success. The battle now became general.

This was Friday the 17th day of Ramaḍan the Second Year of the Hegira (about 14th January 624 A. C.).

But has man ever seen such a fight? Three hundred on foot fighting against 300 on horse-back and 700 others. And only a few of the 300 Muslims had any armour. The Muslims had only two horses and 70 camels but they could not use these in the fighting, as all had to be on an equal footing.

The angels or spiritual powers of God, however, were on the side of the Muslims whilst the disbelievers had nothing but their hatred against Muḥammad. The Muslims also had an inspired general to lead them. The disbelievers had none to rival him.

The Muslims were commanded to find out and attack the leaders and the chiefs of the Quraish. They performed prodigies of valour and wonders of skill. A young Anṣár named Mu'ádh bin 'Amr met Abu-Jahl, the 'Father of Ignorance' and the greatest enemy of God. Abu-Jahl was clad in mail armour all over the head and his body. His shins were the only parts uncovered by iron. Mu'ádh with a single stroke of his sword cut off Abu-Jahl's leg and the latter fell from his horse. 'Ikramah, son of Abu-Jahl, struck Mu'ádh on his left shoulder so that the arm of Mu'ádh hung down, half cut and half uncut. But Mu'ádh went on fighting carrying his hanging arm with him. At last, when he found it interfering with his fight, he put the hanging part of his arm under his foot and

tore it off clear from his body and continued the fight.

Bilál met his old master Umayyah bin Khalaf and his son 'Alī and killed them both.

In this way, eleven out of the fourteen leaders who had conspired to kill Muḥammad at Mecca were killed at Badr. Their names are:

(1) Shaibah
(2) 'Aqabah } sons of Rabi'ah.
(3) Ṭaaima bin Adi
(4) Ḥárith bin 'Amr.
(5) Naḍr bin Ḥárith.
(6) Abul-Bakhtarī
(7) Zam'ah bin Aswad.
(8) Abu-Jahl.
(9) Baniyah
(10) Munabbah } sons of Ḥajjáj; and
(11) Umayyah bin Khalaf.

The three who did not die (Abu-Sufyán not being in the fight), namely,

(1) Abu-Sufyán,
(2) Jubair bin Muṭ'im,
(3) Ḥakīm bin Ḥizám,

embraced Islám later on.

Muḥammad continued urging his men on to fight, and finally he took a handful of sand, read some verses of the Qur-án, and threw it towards the Quraish saying, "Disfigured be the faces of the enemy". And he (Muḥammad) urged his men to attack the Quraish with the utmost of their strength. The Muslims filled with the Spirit of God, sprang at the enemy who seeing defeat staring them in the face and having no leaders

left, fled without even caring for their wounded and dying on the battle-field. Three hundred Muslims had defeated 900 to 1000 warriors of the Quraish.

The Muslim losses were 6 Muhájirs and 8 Anṣár killed or 14 in all. The Meccans had 70 killed and 70 left as prisoners or 140 in all. So that every Muslim martyr had an equivalent of 10 disbelievers in killed and prisoners. Who won the war ? The boastful Quraish or the humble Muslims ? Certainly the Muslims. Yet not even they. It was God who won.

> Remember when He covered you with a (short) nap as a calm from Himself (this refers to Muḥammad's nap when praying for help in the hut),
> And He caused to be sent down upon you water from above,
> That He might cleanse you therewith,
> And carry away from you the filthiness of the evil-one,
> And that He might tighten up your hearts,
> And make you stand fast therewith.

(All this is the result of Muḥammad's prayer for his men whose past sins were forgiven and who were endowed with the power of God to fight heavy odds ranged against them.)

> Remember when thy Lord commanded the Messenger-spirits
> Surely I am with you,
> Therefore make ye firm those who believe ;
> I will soon cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve,
> Then strike above (their) necks,
> And strike off all their extremities. (Qur-án, 8 : 11-12.)

The unbelievers lost because God had made the Muslims unconquerable and put terror into the hearts of His enemies.

> Therefore, you did not kill them, but God killed them...
> (Qur-án, 8 : 17.)

Muḥammad asks his companions to search for Abu-Jahl's body

'ABDULLAH BIN MAS'UD went to look for the dead. He found Abu-Jahl in a dying condition but still alive. 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd said to him : "O enemy of God! see how God has made thee low." Abu-Jahl asked him the result of the battle and on being told that the Meccans had been defeated he asked 'Abdullah to cut his head with all his neck intact close to the shoulders, so that his head might be distinguished as being high and belonging to a chief of the people. Such was the pride of this enemy of God. Muḥammād thanked God for the victory and the first thing he did after the battle was attending to the burial of the dead. Deep pits were dug and the dead were carried into these pits and covered with earth. Umayyah bin Khalaf (the tormentor of Bilál) had been so badly cut into pieces that he was buried where he lay.

Amongst the dead were Abu-Qais bin Aslat, 'Alī bin Umayyah and 'Áṣ bin Munabbah. These were all young men whom the Prophet had loved whilst he was at Mecca and who had been forced into the fight. There was hardly a family of the Quraish which had not a member killed in this battle.

The Prophet gathered the booty and put it in charge of 'Abdullah bin Ka'b of Banu Najjár and sent 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa and Zaid bin Ḥárith on different routes to Medīna to announce the good news of this great victory.

The news reached Medīna just at the moment when they were burying Ruqayya, daughter of the Prophet and wife of 'Othmán bin 'Afán, who had been left behind to look after her, as she was seriously ill when the Prophet set out of Medīna.

'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa and Zaid bin Ḥárith were telling the people how the battle had been fought and won and were giving the names of the Quraish who had been killed. The Jews who did not like this news tried to mislead the people and said: " Muḥammad has been killed and his companions have been defeated. Zaid bin Ḥárith is riding his she-camel. If he was alive the camel would be with him, and Zaid bin Ḥarith is telling false tales to make people keep the peace and for fear of the consequences of the defeat."

Thus, God disclosed to the Muslims what was in the hearts of the Jews. When the news was confirmed, some of the leaders of the Jews said: " The inside of the earth is better than its surface," meaning that death was better than life after Muḥammad's victory over the disbelievers; and one of them, Ka'b bin Ashraf left for Mecca where he joined the disbelievers and by his violent anti-Muḥammad poems and speeches stirred them against the Muslims.

> And they will not cease fighting with you
> Till they turn you back from your faith
> If they can. (Qur-án, 2 : 217.)

There was difference of opinion amongst the Muslims as to the division of the booty. Muḥammad thought the matter over and then under Divine guidance distributed it equally amongst all combatants including those who were compulsorily left in Medīna like 'Othman bin 'Afán (to attend his sick wife) and Usáma bin Zaid (Muḥammad's agent in charge of Medīna whilst he was away). A horseman got double the share of a foot-soldier. He thus laid down the principle of the civilian and the administrator being as important as the soldier in the polity of Islám.

The prisoners were taken along to Medīna but two of them *viz.* 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'aiṭ and Naḍar bin Ḥárith who had always tortured the Muslims at Mecca and who used to utter the most abominable lies against the Prophet and the Qur-án were put to death.

The Treatment of the Prisoners of the Battle of Badr

THE Muslims entered Medīna a day before the prisoners. When the prisoners came the next day, Sauda bint Zam'ah saw Abu-Yazīd Suhail, one of the prisoners, with his hands tied behind his back. She could not help speaking to him and said:

"O Abu-Yazīd! have you surrendered your souls and given away your hands? Death was more honourable than that?" She made this humorous remark on account of the hands of the prisoner being invisible when she saw him face to face. Muḥammad who was in his house heard this remark of his wife and said: "O Sauda! are you going to urge them against God

the High and against His Messenger." She replied: "O Prophet of God! By God who has sent thee with the truth I could not help myself saying what I said when I saw him in such a condition." This shows what liberty of speech every one enjoyed at that time and also that Sauda was not without pity for the prisoners. The fact is that the Prophet himself was moved to pity and the prisoners were distributed amongst the Muslims with instructions that they were to be treated nobly till they were redeemed by the Meccans or till God gave other orders regarding them.

Opinions of Muslims as to Prisoners

MUHAMMAD'S ministers, Abu-Bakr and 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb, were divided in their opinion as to the prisoners. 'Omar, with his usual austere temperament, was for killing them so that they might serve as a warning to others, but Abu-Bakr pleaded for mercy.

One of the prisoners was a poet. He said to the Prophet: "O Muḥammad! I have five daughters, make a charitable gift of me to them." Muḥammad released him.

Abu-Azīz bin 'Omair was a prisoner with Abi Yusr. Abi Yusr would himself live on dates and feed Abu-Azīz bin 'Omair with bread. When Muṣ'ab, full brother of Abu-Azīz, saw this, he said to Abu-Yusr, "Keep him carefully and treat him most strictly. He has a rich mother and she must pay full ransom for him." Abu-Azīz heard this and said: "You are my brother and you advise hardship on me." To which Muṣ'ab replied:

"The man who has you in custody is my brother-in-faith."

After much discussion, the prisoners were redeemed by payment of various sums from 4000 to 1000 *dirham* each. Some who had no money were set free without any ransom but those who could read and write and had no money to redeem them were told to educate ten Muslim boys of Medīna each. They were then released.

THE EXPEDITION OF SAWIQ

THUS ended this fight. The Meccans were so filled with shame that they could hardly look at one another. They were in great sorrow but the most wicked amongst them advised the others not to cry as it would please the Muslims. Abu-Sufyán swore not to have the company of women till he had revenged himself on the Muslims. He took two hundred riders under him and burnt the plantations of dates outside Medīna but ran away when the Muslims came out to meet him. He and his followers after killing two Muslims, ran for their lives and, in order to lighten the burdens of their camels, threw off bags of pounded dry oats (called Sawīq in Arabic) which the Muslims who pursued them picked up. Hence this pursuit of the Meccans is called "The Expedition of Sawīq". This took place in the month of Dhul-Ḥijj (12th) of the Second Year of the Hegira.

THE EFFECTS OF THE BATTLE OF BADR

THE winning of the Battle of Badr, the first pitched battle in Islám, was the most glorious event in its history.

It endowed the Muslims with a will to win, the value of which cannot be reckoned in terms of men and money. Just as the Prophet is an Exemplar to all Muslims so is Badr the ideal of all Muslim battles. When Muslims fight, they must fight for the love of God only and to establish His Truth.

> Surely God has purchased from the faithful their lives and their belongings in exchange for the Garden that is for them... (Qur-án, 9 : 111.)

The Jews and the disbelievers all over Arabia now became aware that a new power had arisen amongst them which was bound to win unless they succeeded in smothering it. "Kill Muḥammad" was their hearts' desire.

Ṣafwán bin Umayyah, whose father and brother had been killed at Badr hired one 'Omair bin Wahab to go to Medīna and murder the Prophet. The conversation was kept secret. But God warned the Prophet as to what was coming. 'Omair reached Medīna with a sword that had been sharpened and the blade of which had been poisoned so that a wound of the sword might prove fatal.

'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb discovered 'Omair, caught hold of him and his sword and brought him before the Prophet.

The Prophet told 'Omar to release 'Omair and asked 'Omair : "What is the cause of your coming ?"

'Omair said : "My son is one of the prisoners. I have come that you may take pity on me and release him."

The Prophet said : "Ṣafwán has hired you to kill me and this sword which you hold is poisoned." The Prophet then related verbatim the conversation which

had taken place between the two. 'Omair said: "I believe in God and I acknowledge that you are the Messenger of God, for excepting me and Ṣafwán no one knew this secret."

"The Battle of Badr," says the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "is not only the most celebrated of battles in the memory of Moslems: it was really also of great historical importance. It helped immensely to strengthen Mohammed's position. Thenceforward open opposition to him in Medīna was impossible; families who had hitherto withdrawn themselves from his influence were so thoroughly cowed by some atrocious murders carried out in obedience to his orders, that they went over to Islám. He was in a position to proceed to break up the autonomy of the Jews." *

The writer alleges murders committed by Muslims but does not give details. Falsehood has no legs to stand upon and is content to shoot the air. However, the testimony of the writer as to the value of the victory is there. He goes on to say in a later paragraph:

"The Meccans also were very deeply impressed by the defeat inflicted on them by the Moslems. They saw clearly that the blow must be avenged, and they took comprehensive measures for their campaign."†

OTHER EVENTS IN THE 2ND YEAR OF THE HEGIRA:

7th May 623 to 26 April 624 A.C.

THE news of the Battle of Badr reached Medīna on

* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 16, 9th Ed., p. 555.

† *Ibid*, p. 555.

18th Ramaḍán of the Second Year of the Hegira, and Muḥammad entered the city on 22nd Ramaḍán (about 19th January 624 A.C.). The Battle of Badr was fought five days earlier on or about 14th January 624 A.C.

This very year saw the institution of the two 'Id prayers, and the order as to the payment of the *Sadaqa Fiṭr* (alms at the completion of thirty days' fast).

Muḥammad married his daughter Umm-Kulthum to 'Othmán bin 'Afán who had become a widower (his first wife Ruqayya, the Prophet's daughter from Khadījah, having died on the 18th Ramaḍán).

This year also saw the marriage of 'Alī bin Abī-Ṭálib, and Faṭimah the youngest daughter of the Prophet The rest of the year passed in peace and quiet, Muḥammad devoting himself to consolidating his position and instructing his people in the service of God. The end of the year, however, was again disturbed by Abu-Sufyán's raid on Medīna already mentioned above and called "The Expedition of Sawīq".

The Death of Abu-Lahab and Hinda's Oath

THE first man to carry the news of the defeat of the Quraish to Mecca was Ḥaisumán bin 'Abdullah of the tribe of Khuzá'. When he told them of the defeat of the Meccans and of the death of their chiefs, leaders and great men, the Meccans would not believe him just as the Jews would not believe in Muḥammad's victory. It is a psychological fact that the mind of man refuses to believe in unpleasant truths. When the news was confirmed, Abu-Lahab, the curse of the Quraish, got such a severe

fever that he died within seven days. Thus was fulfilled God's word told ten years before :

"Perish the two hands of Abu-Lahab and perish he himself."

Abu-Lahab means the "Father of Flame". The womenfolk of Mecca began to cry but Hinda, wife of Abu-Sufyán, rebuked them for their weakness and swore to revenge herself in person on the Muslims. Though her husband Abu-Sufyán was alive, her father 'Utba, her brothers Walīd and Shaibah, and several other relations of hers had been killed in the Battle of Badr. She had her revenge as will be seen in the Battle of Oḥod.

CHAPTER XII

THE THIRD YEAR OF HEGIRA

25th April 624 to 14th April 625 A.C.

TREASON, BLASPHEMY AND TREACHERY AT MEDINA AGAINST MUHAMMAD AND MUSLIMS

AT Mecca, the position of Muḥammad was that of a Messenger of God carrying out His message. He met with terrible opposition and persecution there. The responsibility for the safety of the lives and properties of the Meccans was not, however, on his shoulders. At Medīna, he was both the Messenger of God and the guardian of the lives, properties and honour of its people—Muslims as well as non-Muslims. By a most solemn covenant all the people (including the disbelieving Arabs through their agent Bin Ubbayy) had recognised him as their Administrator.

The Battle of Badr opened the eyes of the Jews. This man (Muḥammad) instead of being their tool was now gaining power over the hearts of the Medinites. They would soon all become Muslims and what then of the dreams of a Jewish kingdom in Arabia ? His influence must be undermined, so they thought.

What would they do ?

The Arabs had fought Muḥammad and lost. The Jews would poison him, his religion and his society.

Intrigue, treachery and treason would be their weapons. And they started to carry out their designs which had been in their minds long before the Battle of Badr.

HYPOCRISY, THE FIRST WEAPON OF THE JEWS

A NUMBER of Jews including 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy became Muslims but not really so.

> And there be some men who say,
> "We believe in God and the Future Day,"
> Yet believe not they.
> Fain would they deceive God
> And those who believe... (Qur-án, 2 : 8-9.)

This false belief served the double purpose of getting secret information from the Muslims and of privately undermining their faith and trust in Muḥammad.

> And a section of the people of the Book say,
> "Believe in that which has been sent down upon the believers,
> During the first part of the day
> And deny it during the latter part thereof,
> That they may come back. (Qur-án, 3 : 71.)

The story of this hypocrisy is so long that volumes may be written upon it. It continued throughout the life of Muḥammad and has continued ever since. Christians and Jews profess Islám, go to Mecca and other Muslim towns, mix with Muslims, find out their weaknesses and take advantage thereof by spreading dissensions and quarrels amongst the Muslims. They are called *Munáfiqīn* in the Qur-án.

> Surely, the hypocrites are in the lowest penetration of the fire... (Qur-án, 4 : 145.)

Thou wilt see most of them allying themselves to the disbelievers;
Surely, evil is what their souls have sent forward...

(Qur-án, 5 : 80.)

There is no remedy for hypocrisy. God pardons the sins of some of the disbelievers, because most of these sins are committed in ignorance, but the knowing hypocrite has his heart sealed against repentance and he goes deeper and deeper into the fire of his own choosing —the everlasting regret which will overtake his soul.

Treason and Blasphemy: their second weapon

WHILST the hypocrites were pouring their poison of irreligion into the hearts of the Arabs and thereby poisoning their own souls, Ka'b bin Ashraf and Abu 'Afak of Banu 'Auf (allied to the Muslims by treaty) joined the disbelievers. They and a woman named 'Aṣma bint Marwán of Banu Umayyah bin Zaid used to compose the filthiest songs against the person of the holy Prophet, against the wives and daughters of the Muslims and against the Word of God—the Qur-án.

Their object was to raise a rebellion against the State as established by Muḥammad at Medīna. This was High Treason and the penalty for High Treason is Death.

The Muslims, true to their faith and to their leader, were not afraid of the consequences of killing these abominable traitors and all three of them were secretly put to death. But there is no proof that Muḥammad had actually commanded their death. It was God's Will working through the hands of the servants of God.

Muḥammad had disapproved of the death of 'Omar bin Ḥaḍrami at Nekhla on the last day of Rajab (623 A. C.) but God had exculpated the Muslims.

It was so at Medīna. God Himself had put into the hearts of the Muslims, who loved their Prophet above father, mother and child, nay above their own souls, to put these traitors into their resting places for ever. And a traitor guilty of High Treason is an outlaw and may be killed by anyone without any special authority. May God guide us all to the Truth and spread Peace and Unity amongst mankind!

THE JEWS OF BANU QAINUQA' FIGHT MUHAMMAD: 624 A.C.

THE poems of Abu 'Afak and Ka'b bin Ashraf were having their effect. The Muslims, both male and female, were being openly defied.

An Arab Muslim woman went to the street where the Jews of Banu Qainuqá' used to live and gave some ornament to be made by a goldsmith there. The Jews began to tease her. She was a good lady and refused to be taken in. One of the Jews came behind her and opened the fastenings of her dress whilst she was busy watching the making of the ornament. She remained unaware of the Jew's rascality so that when she got up from the shop she became naked. The Jews had a hearty laugh at her exposure. She cried for help. A Muslim who was passing there took her side. The Jewish goldsmith was killed and so was the Muslim. This led to a great deal of ill-feeling between the Muslims

and Banu Qainuqá'. Muḥammad requested Banu Qainuqá' to abide by the agreement and to prevent their men from doing injury to the Muslims. But their minds had been thoroughly poisoned against Muḥammad and the reply they gave him was:

"O Muḥammad! let not thy victory over a people who did not know the science of war deceive thee. By God, if thou fightest us, thou shalt know that we are Men."

Muḥammad consulted his companions and with his usual courage and energy laid siege to the quarters of Banu Qainuqá'. The latter asked the Quraish to help them and the Quraish promised to do so but within fifteen days of the siege they were so hard pressed that they had to submit to Muḥammad.

'ABDULLAH BIN UBBAYY AND THE EXPULSION OF BANU QAINUQA'

WHEN the Banu Qainuqá' submitted, Muḥammad consulted his companions as to what should be done with them, and it was decided that the instigators of the rebels should be executed.

'Abdullah bin Ubbayy interceded for them. Muḥammad was exceedingly loath to release them but other people also interceded for the Jews; and finally under the care of 'Ubáda bin Ṣámit, the Jews of Banu Qainuqá' were allowed to emigrate leaving their arms behind them. They emigrated to Wádī al-Qurá, north of Arabia, and finally to Syria and other places.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES OF MUHAMMAD AFTER BADR

THE Battle of Badr had resulted in a victory for the Muslims but no peace had been made between the Meccans and the Muslims. On the contrary, open preparations by the Meccans for a war on a much bigger scale were going on as even the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* admits.

The whole of the profits of Abu Sufyan's caravan were devoted to buying arms, armour and supplies for the coming war. Banu Bakr and other neighbouring tribes of Mecca were brought into alliance by the Quraish against Muḥammad. Intrigue, sedition and treachery were being concocted with the Jews in and around Medīna. Muḥammad was not unaware of these preparations. To confound the enemy's plans Muḥammad made covenants with all the coastal tribes of Arabia so that the Quraish might not have easy access through their territory to Syria or to Medīna.

The Quraish finding their way to Syria barred, opened commerce with Iraq both with the idea of making profit and of getting allies against Muḥammad. But they had reckoned without his foresight.

Ṣafwán bin Umayyah started towards Iraq from Mecca. It was now the winter of 624-625 A.C., and there was not much need of carrying water. Ṣafwán's caravan travelled by the desert of Nejd far away from Medīna and safe from the attack of the Muslims. As a further precaution he took a guide from Banu Bakr bin Wáil.

To the utter surprise of the Quraish, Zaid bin Ḥárith with 100 riders from Medīna was before them on their way to Iraq. The Meccans left all their belongings and sought safety in retreat. This was the biggest booty the Muslims got so far. This booty was truly a God-send to the Muslims for they were now hard pressed on all sides and news coming from Mecca was of the most alarming nature. A house divided against itself cannot stand, and Medīna must be unified by bonds of love. Muḥammad encouraged marriages between his companions and followers. He set an example by giving his own daughters Umm-Kulthūm and Fáṭimah to 'Othmán bin 'Afán and 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib, respectively. He himself married 'Áishah bint Abu-Bakr and now he married Ḥafṣa bint 'Omar, another great gain to Islám, for Ḥafṣa was next only to 'Áishah in intelligence and her devotion to the Prophet and to Islám.

Muḥammad, his companions and followers were one compact wall of the spiritual citadel of Islám. No one could break it.

MEDINA IN IMMINENT DANGER: 625 A. C.

"REVENGE yourselves on Muḥammad, on him who has killed your sons, your brothers, your fathers and your friends; on him who has looted your caravan and stopped your commerce. Revenge, Revenge, Revenge"—was the cry in Mecca. "Let us gather together in Dár al-Nadwah and follow our leaders."

CHAPTER XIII

THE BATTLE OF OHOD

(The third year of Hegira)

SO the leaders, including Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb, Jubair bin Muṭ'im, Ṣafwán bin Umayyah 'Ikramah bin Abu-Jahl, Ḥárith bin Hishám, Ḥuwaiṭ bin 'Abd ul-'Uzza and others, gathered in Dár al-Nadwah and decided on war with Muḥammad on a scale and with an army which they thought Muḥammad could not possibly meet.

Someone suggested that the women be taken along so as to stand behind the men to remind them of the defeat of Badr and to urge them to fight. "Consult the women themselves" said someone. Hindah bint 'Utbah, wife [illegible]bu-Sufyán, was the general of the women. She [illegible]ble oaths of vengeance on the Muslims and [illegible] anyone of her sex of any importance [illegible]

[illegible] set forth with 3000 soldiers, (out of [illegible]aring mail-armour) 200 horses, and [illegible]s and armour enough and to spare; a[illegible] revenge himself on Muḥammad.

[illegible]ION OF MEDINA : 3 A. H.

THE[illegible] amongst the disbelievers of Mecca [illegible]pathy with Muḥammad and that ma[illegible] 'Abbás. He sent the news to Muḥam[illegible] courier, a man of the tribe of Ghifár, met M[illegible] at Q[illegible] near Medīna. When

Muḥammad learnt the contents of the letter he sent men to warn people to withdraw their camels and sheep from the outskirts of Medīna.

Muḥammad came to Medīna from Qubá immediately, and sent his own men to find out the truth. They soon returned and confirmed the news as told in the letter of 'Abbás. The Aus and the Khazraj and all the people of Medīna were terribly afraid of this invasion and no one slept that night with ease. Even the Prophet himself was somewhat taken aback by the seriousness of the news which he received. A thousand or two thousand soldiers was what one could expect but here were 3000 coming against him with all the ferocity and vengeance characteristic of pagan Arabs with whom the killing and mutilating of the victims and prisoners of war was an ordinary affair. And their ferocious women-folk headed by Hindah were accompanying their pagan males. Surely this was not going to be a battle but a butchery.

THE DAY BEFORE THE BATTLE: FRIDAY, 10TH DAY OF SHAWWAL (10TH MONTH) OF 3RD YEAR OF THE HEGIRA = 25TH JANUARY 625

Two Opinions about the Ba

NEXT morning the inhabitants of Medīna woke up in great fear for the Meccans had already reached Oḥod, three to four miles north-east of Medīna. Muḥammad called the Muslims and the Jews together for consultation. "How shall we meet the enemy?" was the question.

Muḥammad's own opinion was that they should

fortify Medīna so that, when the Quraish attacked, they might be better able to repel them.

'Abdullah bin Ubayy agreed with this opinion saying: "O Prophet of God! We will fight the enemy in the city and when they advance, our women and children will pelt them with stones whilst we will fight them with our swords and Medīna is formed like a fort and has never been conquered by any foe."

All the leaders of the Jews, Muhájirs and Anṣár agreed with this opinion.

The Other Opinion

BUT the Muslims had liberty of speech and they were asked if they agreed with the opinion of the elders. The young men were of a different opinion. There were amongst them those who had fought at Badr and who wanted to become martyrs. But the larger number of them had not fought at Badr and wanted to distinguish themselves. The one thing they were after was "Paradise" *i.e.* Martyrdom. "Shall we let our enemies think that we were afraid of meeting them and preferred siege to death? Shall we allow our fields and our plantations to be at their mercy whilst we are imprisoned in Medīna? If we do so, it will only increase the courage of our enemies who will gather all Arabia against us for the sake of loot. God who gave us victory at Badr will make us victorious at Oḥod. And if we die, there is Paradise for us. We will fight and die for the sake of God."

Speeches like these filled the hearts of the young

Muslims. Their souls were overflowing with the power of Faith. They were the sons of great fighters and now they had the strength of Islám added to their hereditary courage. How could they bear to be besieged?

Even some of the old men were willing to die. Khaithamah Abu Sa'd bin Khaithamah said: "It may be that God will give us the victory or it will be *Shahadat* (martyrdom). I was extremely anxious to go and fight at Badr but I missed it. My son went and he was lucky to taste the everlasting life. Yesterday I saw him in my dream saying: 'Join us, we will be your companions in Paradise. I have got what my Lord promised me and found it to be the truth.' O Prophet of God! I am most willing to accompany my son to Paradise. I am advanced in years and my bones have become brittle and I wish to meet my Lord."

The majority were clearly against being besieged and Muḥammad made up his mind to follow the majority. God's Will be done on the heavens above and the earth below.

After Friday prayers with the congregation, Muḥammad gave the glad news of victory to those who were persevering and ordered the people to get ready to go out and meet the enemy.

'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb and Abu-Bakr helped the Prophet in putting on his armour. Those who had opposed the Prophet were very much upset for fear of having committed sin in doing so. But he was not offended. "Wait and see what I command, then follow that and you will be victorious if you

persevere." And Muḥammad gave orders for advance towards Oḥod. He thus firmly laid down the principle in Islám that in all matters relating to the administration of a Muslim country, the Ruler or Administrator must consult and, if possible, follow the opinion of the majority. He subordinated his own opinion and his own wishes to those of the majority of the Muslims. If this principle of the right of the people to decide their own affairs had always been adhered to by Muslims they might have avoided many mistakes which overtook them in after years.

The Defection of 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy

MUHAMMAD had not gone far from Medīna when Ibn Ubbayy (and his 300 Jewish followers) left the Muslims on the pretext that Muḥammad had not followed his advice and was obeying mere boys who were with him.

When the morning came, Muḥammad found himself with 700 Muslims to fight 3000 of the Quraish including 700 mailed warriors and all of them bent on Revenge.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE OF OHOD: SATURDAY 26TH JANUARY 625 A. C.

The Muslim Lines

MUHAMMAD reached Oḥod on Saturday, 11th of Shawwál 3 A. H. He chose his positions so that the mount of Oḥod was at his back. He arranged his men in battle order and picked out 50 men and placed them on the mountain pass, or ravine, with the following orders:

" Guard our rear for we fear that they may attack us from that side ; and remain in your positions and do not move therefrom. Even if you see us defeating the enemy and entering his camp, do not depart from your position. And if you see us being killed do not come to our help to defend us. And it is for you to shoot their horses, for the horses cannot win against arrows."

Then he ordered the rest not to begin the fight till he commanded them to fight.

The Arrangement of the Quraish Army at Oḥod

THE Quraish also arranged their army in order.

Khálid bin Walīd was on the right wing ; 'Ikramah bin Abu-Jahl was on the left wing ; ' Abd ul-'Uzza Ṭalḥa bin Abu-Ṭalḥa (the standard-bearer) was in charge of the centre together with Abu-Sufyán. Lanes were left open for the women to go to the front and back beating tambourines and drums, carrying their national idols and urging their men to fight singing as follows :

"Courage ! ye sons of ' Abd ud-Dár
Courage ! ye patriots in the War,
Strike and kill them all."

The Sword of Muḥammad and Abu-Dujānah at Oḥod

THE two armies now got ready to fight. The Quraish shouting for Revenge on account of their defeat at Badr and the Muslims calling on God for help and victory and Paradise. The Prophet took out his sword and called volunteers to bear it. Many offered themselves but the

Prophet withheld it till Abu-Dujánah Simák bin Kharasha claimed it. "And what is to be done with it, O Prophet of God ?" "Strike the enemy till the sword be bent," said Muḥammad. Abu-Dujánah took a red band and tied it round his head—the Red Band of Death - and walked between the lines of the Muslims and the enemy in a proud manner as was his habit. When the Prophet saw him doing that he said: "God would certainly be wrath at such a swaggering except on such an occasion."

How the Battle of Oḥod began

THE first to come out and start the battle was one Abu-'Ámir bin Ṣaifi of Aus who had deserted his fellow citizens and joined the Meccans. He came out with 15 of his companions thinking that when he declared himself on the side of the Meccans, the Aus who were with Muḥammad would desert him. He called out to the Aus: "O ye people of the Aus, I am Abu-'Ámir." The Muslims amongst the Aus replied:

"May God curse thy eyes, O sinner."

And the fight became general.

The attempt of the Quraish to turn the Muslim Flanks

THE Quraish and 'Ikramah with 100 horsemen made a desperate attempt to turn the Muslim right flank. But the Muslims stood firm and pelted them with stones from the hill till 'Ikramah fled.

Similarly, Khálid bin Walīd tried to turn the Muslim left flank (and Khálid was also in charge of one

hundred horsemen of the Quraish), but the archers on the Pass, posted by Muḥammad, killed a number of horses and so both wings of the enemy of Islám fell back.

Ḥamzah and Abu-Dujánah now calling out "Die, Die" fell on the enemy and killed every one who came in their way. Abu-Dujánah saw a person who was shouting most violently amongst the Quraish. He drew his sword to kill him and lo! it was a woman—Hindah wife of Abu-Sufyán. He left her, so that the sword of the holy Prophet might not be stained with a woman's blood and went after the others.

Ḥamzah killed the standard-bearer of the Quraish.

The Death of Hamza

JUBAIR BIN MUT'IM had a savage negro slave whom he promised to emancipate on condition that he should kill Ḥamzah. The slave was an expert in throwing a javelin. He went with the Meccans and saw Ḥamzah like a yellow camel falling on the Meccans and killing them with his sword. When Ḥamzah's right hand got tired he put the sword in his left and then back again in the right. The negro slave watched his opportunity, and Ḥamzah not suspecting him went his way. The negro threw his javelin and Ḥamzah was killed. The slave then informed Hindah as to Ḥamzah's death.

One Ḥanẓala was going to kill Abu-Sufyán himself but was attacked from behind by Shaddád bin Aswad Laithi and killed. Naḍar bin Aus, Sa'd bin Rabi' and 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib amongst them killed all the standard-bearers of the Quraish—eight dying from the sword of 'Alī

alone. Altogether 12 standard-bearers of the Quraish were killed that day and finally the standard lay on the ground without anyone of the Quraish daring to pick it up.

The Quraish fought with the utmost fury. Every time a warrior of theirs tried to fall back the women barred his way. "Will you leave us to be the victims of the enemy ?" they said, and the fight went on.

But the Muslims were filled with the spirit of God and Ḥamzah's death made no difference to them. As at Badr they were not fighting in order that they might live but in order that they might die. The three thousand of the Quraish with 100 horsemen on each flank made no impression on the Muslims and the Prophet urged them to fight.

The force of the Quraish attack was spent. They fled, the women notwithstanding. The Muslims followed them, entered their camp and began to take possession of their belongings.

The Mistake of the Archers posted on the Pass

THE fifthy archers whom Muḥammad had posted on the Pass now saw the field clear before their eyes and their brethren engaged in capturing the booty left behind by the Meccans. They were tempted to leave their positions and join in the taking of the booty. Their leader 'Abdullah bin Jubair did his best to prevent them from leaving their positions but they did not see any danger in doing so. The joy of victory blinded them to the Prophet's strict injunction against their departing from their station. Only eleven or twelve men were left with

'Abdullah bin Jubair and the rest joined the others who were gathering the booty.

Khálid bin Walīd saw his opportunity. He went round to the other side of the hill and took the dozen archers from behind. He also sent messages to 'Ikrama and Abu-Sufyán as to the weakness created in the Muslim positions. At once all the forces of the Quraish turned back on the Muslims.

Victory changed into Chaos: A Test from God

GOD'S ways are wonderful. He had tested the Muslims in victory. He would now test them in defeat. Those young Medinites (and old ones also) who were so keen on meeting God and going to Paradise yesterday !—where were they ? would they go to Paradise now or go back to Medīna ? He (God) sent Khálid bin Walīd on to them from behind, 'Ikrama from the other flank and the fleeing Abu-Sufyán and his hordes from the front. The Muslims were surrounded on all sides. They dropped their booty and picked up their swords. But alas ! the formation of the lines was gone. There was no order to observe and no leader to follow. And all this through the disobedience of the command of the Prophet of God. The enemy regained their courage and played havoc with the ranks of the Muslims. 'Abdullah bin Jubair, commander of the archers, was killed by Khálid's horsemen and so were the majority of the rest of his eleven or twelve companions.

Some of the Muslims, in the chaos which prevailed, could not distinguish friend from foe and were doing their own men to death.

THE PROPHET'S LIFE IN DANGER

The Bravery of his Followers

THE Prophet himself with about 12 men was surrounded by the enemy. Muṣ'ab bin 'Ūmair took up the standard of Islám and stationed himself near the Prophet. One Ibn Qumayya Laithi killed Muṣ'ab from behind and as Muṣ'ab resembled the Prophet in appearance, Qumayya thought that he had killed Muḥammad. He climbed up a hill and shouted: "Muḥammad has been killed!" The disbelievers began to dance with joy. The Muslims were thunderstruck.. But just then Ka'b bin Málik, who was near, shouted: "Ye Muslims! be happy! the Prophet of God is alive and whole! Come here!"

And the Prophet himself shouted as loud as he could, "Towards me, ye servants of God! I am the Messenger of God."

Muḥammad becomes the Centre of the Fight

IN an instant, both friend and foe rushed towards Muḥammad. But the enemy got there first. They were numerous and the Muslims were dispersed. One 'Abdullah bin Sheháb came up to the Prophet and wounded him on the face. Ibn Qumayya, who was still not far off, finding his mistake in saying he had killed Muḥammad, gave him a sword-cut on the head. Muḥammad's armour saved his life but two of the iron rings of his armour pierced his cheek. 'Obaidah bin Jarráḥ drew out the rings with his teeth. The rings had gone so far deep into the bones of the upper jaw that

'Obaidah lost two teeth in drawing them out. Muḥammad was bleeding profusely but even then all he said was: " How can a people succeed who dye the face of their prophet with blood whilst he is calling them to God ? "

But God's help was near. The devoted friends and followers of Muḥammad rushed to the place, giving and receiving blows. Everyone of them had blood rushing out of his own wounds but what of that ? Muḥammad, the beloved one of God, must be saved even if all the Muslims had to die for him. They soon formed a cordon round the Prophet.

Abu-Dujánah who performed miracles of strength with the Prophet's sword came up and covered the Prophet's holy person with his own, and exposed his broad back to the enemy till it was covered with their arrows.

Sa'd bin Waqqáṣ, Abu-Ṭalḥa, Zubair, 'Abd ur-Raḥmán bin 'Auf made a wall of human flesh round the Prophet receiving sword-cuts on their arms.

Ziyád Anṣárī and five of his companions gave their lives in defending the person of the Prophet.

Even a woman named Umm-'Omára had her arm cut by Qumayya whilst she was trying to save the Prophet from Qumayya's attacks.

Whilst all these attacks on the Prophet's life were going on and were unsuccessful, because so many heroes of Islám laid down their own lives to save his, one of the disbelievers pelted him with stones. The holy Prophet's lip was cut and one of his lower teeth was broken. The Prophet's foot slipped and he fell into a pit. 'Alī held his hand, Abu-Bakr and Ṭalḥa pulled him up.

The fight continued with unabated fury. Gradually the Muslims, with matchless courage and under the most difficult circumstances imaginable, repelled the attacks of the enemy and forced them back.

Wounded, bleeding, exhausted but undaunted, Muḥammad ordered his companions to get to the top of the nearest prominence.

Abu-Sufyán saw this and went round to get behind the Muslims. The Prophet ordered 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb to prevent this manœuvre. 'Omar with some Muslims succeeded in pushing Abu-Sufyán and his men down the hill.

The move of the Prophet to the top of the crag proved immediately successful. Scattered bodies of the Muslims made a rush to the place where he was. The Quraish were also exhausted and, seeing so many of the faithful round Muḥammad, made no further attack.

Danger was not over yet. One Ubbayy bin Khalaf had vowed to kill Muḥammad. He was riding a horse and now advanced to fulfil his vow. Muḥammad told his companions not to interfere and let him come on. When he was near enough, Muḥammad took a spear from Ḥárith bin Ṣimma and gave his assailant a wound in the neck. The assailant turned his back and ran in a hurry, making himself the laughing-stock of his own companions.

This last stroke of the Prophet so heartened the Muslims and so disappointed the Meccans that the latter got tired and gave up the attack.

Muḥammad also retired with his companions to a

sheltered part of the ravine where 'Alī bin Abu Ṭálib washed his wounds with water collected from a hollow in the ravine.

Abu-Sufyán came near the place and shouted: "Is Muḥammad one of you?" The Muslims, under the Prophet's order, remained silent. Abu-Sufyán then called out the names of Abu-Bakr and 'Omar and meeting with no response said: "It seems, they are all killed." 'Omar could control himself no longer and shouted: "O enemy of God, we are all alive and God will disgrace thee." Abu-Sufyán was nonplussed but shouted with pride: "*Á'la Hubal, Á'la Hubal*", (Hubal is great, Hubal is great.) Muḥammad told 'Omar to reply, "*Allah-o-Á'ala Wa-Ajal.*" (God is Greatest and most Glorious.)

The reader will see what influence the language of the Arabs has over their minds. This verbal duel is far more effective than sword cuts:

> Abu-Sufyán shouted back: "*Laná 'Uzza, wa-lá 'Uzza lakum.*" (We have 'Uzza on our side and you have none.)
>
> To which 'Omar at the command of the Prophet replied: "*Allah-o-Mauláná wa lá maulá lakum.*" (God is our Protector and for you there is none.)
>
> Abu-Sufyán said: "To-day's battle is a set-off against Badr."
>
> "No," replied 'Omar, "our dead are in heaven and yours are in hell."
>
> "We will meet again, next year, at Badr,'

shouted back Abu-Sufyán.

The Prophet told 'Omar to reply: "Yes, that is an appointment between you and ourselves."

The Mutilation of the Muslim Martyrs by the Quraish and the Forbearance of the Muslims

WHILST the Muslims were waiting the turn of events in the cave, the Meccans, both men and women, were busy in mutilating the Muslim wounded and dead on the field of battle. Hinda, wife of Abu-Sufyán, tore out the heart and liver of Ḥamza and tried to chew the heart or the liver raw but had to throw it out. It was too tough for her. Zubair bin 'Awwám was also similarly treated and so were many others. The Meccan women made strings of the ears, noses and other parts of the corpses and carried them to Mecca as treasures of war but the Meccans did not capture a single Muslim nor had they a single animal or anything else as booty.

After the Meccans had gone, the Prophet buried his own dead and was extremely bitter in his heart on account of the atrocities of the Meccans. He even said that if he got hold of the Meccans he would repay them in their own coin but God immediately forbade him to do that:

> And leave ye sins that are apparent and (sins) that are hidden.... (Qur-án, 6 : 121.)
>
> And good and evil are not the equals of each other.
>
> Repel (evil) with that which is better and lo! he between whom and thee there was enmity shall be as if he was (thy) warm friend.

And none attain this except those who persevere.
And none attain this except those possessed of great fortune." (Qur-án, 41 : 34-35.)

OHOD—A MORAL VICTORY FOR MUSLIMS

THE Muslims who fought in this battle were so poor that they had not cloth enough to cover the dead bodies of their comrades. They had only 2 horses in the whole army against 200 of the Quraish. The Battle of Oḥod is regarded by non-Muslims as a defeat for the Muslims, but there could never be a greater victory for the Truth. How 700 partially armed Muslims defeated 3000 well-armed and well-equipped disbelievers who had the advantage of 200 horsemen and 700 mailed-warriors; how a small number of his companions finally succeeded in rescuing Muḥammad against hundreds of the enemy determined on killing him; how Muḥammad stood his ground with three serious wounds on his face; how he rallied his men when they had been completely surrounded and when their destruction seemed certain and last but not least the courage, skill and self-sacrifice of his companions in repelling the enemy are military feats the like of which it is hard to discover in the history of the world. No historian has ever said, or can say, that the Muslims were not as brave and as faithful at Oḥod as they were at Badr. The archers made a mistake and the whole Muslim army had to suffer for it, but even this mistake provided the Muslims with a lesson and saved them scores of battles in after years. The holy Prophet is an exemplar to Muslims and it was necessary

that he should leave an example how a Muslim general should behave when the day is going against him. The misfortune of Oḥod was one of the greatest blessings in disguise. It certainly was not a victory for the Meccans. They had their Revenge by mutilating corpses. If that was victory they might claim it to be so, but the threat of Abu-Sufyán for another war at Badr shows clearly that even he realised that Oḥod had not been a decisive victory for the Quraish. The losses of the Meccans in this battle were not so serious as at Badr but they lost quite a number of their leaders, *viz.*, Walīd bin 'Áṣī, Abu-Omayya and Hishám sons of Abi-Ḥudhaifa, Ubbayy bin Khalaf, 'Abdullah bin Ḥámid As'adi, Ṭalḥa bin Abi-Ṭalḥa, Abu-Sa'id bin Abu-Ṭalḥa, Masáfi' and Jalás sons of Ṭalḥa, Arṭát bin Shura Ḥabīl and others, —altogether 17 leaders of the Quraish.

The Muslims suffered heavy losses both in killed and wounded. The killed alone numbered 70. Muḥammad's heart was full of sorrow at the death of Ḥamza and the rest of the Muslims. He returned to Medīna and the Quraish left for Mecca. He passed the night in meditation and when the morning came he was as full of fight as he had been before.

MUHAMMAD PURSUES THE QURAISH : SUNDAY 12TH SHAWWAL 3 A.H. = 27TH JANUARY 625 A.C.

AFTER the morning prayers and after doing what was necessary for the precautions to be taken at Medīna, Muḥammad sent his crier round to call people to pursue the enemy but only those were to accompany him who

had taken part in the fight. All those who were invited (including the wounded) responded most bravely and Muḥammad set out after the Quraish till he reached a place called Ḥamra-al-Asad where he encamped. Abu-Sufyán and his army were at Rauhá. He got news of Muḥammad's coming out again. A man called Ma'bad-al-Khuzái going from Medīna to Mecca passed Abu-Sufyán's army. He was still a disbeliever. Abu-Sufyán asked him about Muḥammad and his army. Ma'bad replied: "Muḥammad and his companions have come out in pursuit of you in such numbers as have not been seen before and all those who were left behind on the first day have joined him and all of them are enraged against you and are bent on revenging themselves on you. Abu-Sufyán was on the horns of a dilemma. If he retired before Muḥammad, all Arabia would call him a coward. If he fought and lost, his so-called victory at Oḥod would become another Badr.

So, he also stopped where he was, sending his horsemen towards Muḥammad and threatening to follow. But Muḥammad had chosen a position to his own liking and was not afraid of the Quraish. He remained there for three nights making big fires so that the enemy might think him to be in great force.

At last, Abu-Sufyán's heart failed him and he returned to Mecca content with what he had achieved at Oḥod.

Muḥammad returned to Medīna with his prestige greatly enhanced and with his followers encouraged by the fear which they had inspired into the hearts of the Meccans.

THE QUR-AN ON THE BATTLE OF OHOD : 3 A.H.

CHAPTER three of the Qur-án (Ál-'Imrán—The Family of 'Imrán or 'Amrán) has lengthy references to the Battle of Oḥod some of which are worth noting.

The unwillingness of Banu Salema and Banu Harisa to go out with him is thus told in the Qur-án:

> And remember the morning when thou didst go out of thy family.
>
> Settling the faithful in their stations for the purpose of fighting,
>
> And God is Hearing, Knowing!
>
> When two parties amongst you desired to act cowardly...
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 120-121.)

Verse 126 states that the Quraish returned unsuccessful and verses 127 and 128 ask Muḥammad to postpone his judgment on them as God will deal with them as He pleases. Verses 138 to 142 encourage Muslims and command them not to be downhearted. There is wisdom to be learnt both from victory and repulse:

> Therefore weary not and grieve not,
> For you are on the top
> If you be believers. (Qur-án, 3 : 138.)

Hardships, wounds and death are the means of assaying and distinguishing the faithful (140-142). Muslims are exhorted that if their leader dies they must not fly:

> And Muḥammad is but a messenger,
> Surely (many) messengers have gone before him.

If then, he die or be killed,
Will you turn upon your heels ?...

(Qur-án, 3 : 143.)

This verse refers to the consternation caused amongst Muslims on the rumour of his death. The promise which Muḥammad made to the believers, *viz.*, the defeat of the Quraish and the mistake of the archers are thus described :

And most certainly God made good His promise to you when you cut them into pieces with His knowledge,
Until when you weakened
And quarrelled about the order (given to you)
And you disobeyed (the prophet)
After he had shewn you what you had loved (victory) ;
Of you were some who desired this world (*i.e.* booty),
And of you were some who desired Future (*i.e.* Paradise),
Then He moved you away from them
That He might discipline you...

(Qur-án, 3 : 151.)

When the Muslims quarrelled over the Prophet's order, they had to undergo the penalty of their disobedience but it was a discipline to them for their future guidance. In the end God forgave them :

And He has certainly forgiven you.
And full of grace is God towards the faithful.

(Qur-án, 3 : 151.)

The Muslims were sorrowful, first because they had lost their victory and their booty but that was nothing compared to the sorrow when they heard that the Prophet was in danger. The diverse feelings of the Muslims and

the courage of those who responded to the Prophet's call are vividly described:

> When you fled far away and would not look towards anyone
> And the messenger was calling you from your rear
> So that He (God) caused you one sorrow in place of another,
> In order that you should grieve not for what you had missed
> And for what had befallen you,
> For God knows what you do.
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 152.)

The next few verses describe the sayings of the cowards who did not follow Muḥammad and who congratulated themselves on their safety. Death and Life are in God's hands and people have no control over these. Everything has its appointed term and in any event:

> If you are killed in God's way,
> Or if you die,
> Surely forgiveness from God
> And mercy
> Are better than what they hoard.
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 156.)

A study of the latter half of this chapter proves conclusively that God approved the action of those who voted for an open fight and that God disapproved the conduct and the sayings of the Jews who abandoned Muḥammad after having agreed to stand by his judgment; that it is not for the Muslims or their leaders to think of the immediate consequence of their actions as long as they are on the Right Path; that calamities and death need not

frighten them; they befall all men irrespective of their faiths; that the Muslims are invariably successful—they gain more in the Future than what they lose in the Present. In one word, that Faith in God and Success are one and the same thing:

> And these are the people who succeed.
>
> (Qur-án, 2 : 5.)

THE LESSONS OF THE BATTLE OF OHOD

(1)

OBEDIENCE to the Commands of the General when those commands have been given after due deliberation is absolutely imperative on all Muslims.

(2)

That the consequences of disobedience are not confined to those who disobey but may involve the whole body of Muslims:

> And take care of a calamity which does not fall upon those amongst you exclusively who do wrong...
>
> (Qur-án, 8 : 25.)

"The Muslims," the Prophet says, "are like one body or one man."

(3)

That even a pending defeat may be turned to advantage and calamity warded off by courage, skill and a cool-headed manœuvre.

(4)

That God listens to the prayers of both the believers and disbelievers, and that each gets what he deserves. In other words, God is Impartial. In this Battle of Oḥod,

the disbelievers wished for Revenge (not victory) and they had it according to their desire. The Muslims wished for victory and martyrdom but more for the second than for the first and they had both in the proportion they asked for. The Jews wished and prayed for "safety first" and they had it also.

(5)

That in all wars and fightings the final result always remains in the hands of God. Both the Muslims and the disbelievers at Oḥod got what they wanted but God being the Best of Plan-Makers knew that the time had not arrived for a final decision and so the struggle was postponed to another day:

> But had God pleased He could have taken retribution from them but (this is so) in order that He may discipline some of you by means of the others...
>
> (Qur-án, 47 : 4.)

Those who think that wars must be stopped might ponder over this verse (last quoted) and find consolation in the fact that even war should be regarded as a discipline for the progress of humanity.

THE EFFECTS OF THE BATTLE OF OHOD

THE Meccans were overjoyed when Abu-Sufyán returned to them and told them of the death of Ḥamza and other Muslims and what had been done to their corpses. One cannot blame them for they really knew no better.

The Jews, on the other hand, who knew better and who should have fought with Muḥammad in terms of the

Treaty they had signed, were exulting over the misfortunes of the Muslims. But God is Impartial. He was waiting till the cup of the Iniquity of the Jews was full to the brim before punishing them.

OTHER EVENTS OF 3 A. H.

HASAN BIN ALI BIN ABU-TALIB was born in this year. Muḥammad spent the rest of the year in the teaching of Islám and in dictating the Qur-án and urging people to study it and to commit its contents to memory. He had now lived two years nine and-a-half months in Medīna and from being a Refugee he had become the Administrator of a State and his enemies were forcing him to a policy of "Conquer or Die." And Muḥammad was ready to die but he lived and conquered.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FOURTH YEAR OF HEGIRA

13th April 625 A.C. to 4th April, 626

THE Jews and the Quraish of Mecca were not the only people who were rejoicing over the misfortune of the Muslims at Oḥod. The eyes of all Arabia were opened to the weakness of the Muslims. The Jews had betrayed them by their lack of support and what could a few hundred or even a thousand poor Muslims do? At Oḥod mere boys had to be taken into the army to make its numbers reach 700.

THE EXPEDITION OF ABU-SALAMA

1st Muharram 4 A. H.

THE Arabs were freebooters by nature. The first to try to take advantage of Muḥammad's weakness were Ṭulaiḥa and Salama, sons of Khwailid of Banu Asad. They declared to their people that Muḥammad was weak and that it was a good opportunity to have a raid on Medīna and capture the cattle of the Muslims.

Muḥammad got wind of this news and on the first day of the New Year (Muḥarram 4 A. H.) he appointed Abu-Salama bin 'Abd ul-Asad as standard-bearer of an expedition of 150 including such men as Abu-'Obaida bin Jarráḥ, Sa'd bin Waqqáṣ and Usaid bin Huḍair.

Muḥammad ordered them to travel by night and to conceal themselves at day-time, and to adopt unfrequented paths. Abu-Salama reached his destination in safety and took the enemy by surprise. The Banu Asad fled carrying away what they could and leaving some cattle for the Muslims. No fighting took place and Abu-Salama returned to Medīna. He had been seriously wounded at Oḥod and soon afterwards died of his wound.

THE EXPEDITION OF 'ABDULLAH BIN UNAIS

5th Muharram 4 A. H. = 17th April 625 A. C.

THE previous expedition had hardly left Medīna when news reached Muḥammad that Khálid bin Sufyán bin Nubaiḥ Hudhali of Nakhla or 'Urána was preparing to raid Medīna. Muḥammad had no army to despatch, but the mischief must be nipped in the bud, or else the whole of Arabia would be on him soon. Muḥammad entrusted the affair into the hands of 'Abdullah bin Unais. The latter went by himself, met Khálid and after finding out from Khálid's own lips that he was preparing to gather an army to raid Medīna, 'Abdullah killed Khálid and escaped. He returned to Medīna on 23rd Muḥarram 4 A. H. (about 6th May 625 A. C.).

MURDER OF SIX MUSLIM MISSIONARIES: 4 AT AR-RAJI' AND 2 AT MECCA

Ṣafar 4 A.H.

IN the second month of this year, *viz.*, Ṣafar 4 A.H., 7 men of Banu Qára (related to Banu Asad) went to

Medīna and asked for instructors in the Faith of Islám. The Prophet had already begun sending missionaries to preach Islám to various tribes just as he had formerly sent twelve disciples to Medīna. When these six missionaries reached the place of Banu Hudhail, they were set upon by 200 men. Three of the missionaries were killed outright; one who escaped was stoned to death. Two were taken as prisoners and sold to the Meccans. One of them, Zaid bin Dathinna, was sold to Ṣafwán bin Ommaya who ordered his slave Nasṭás to kill him in revenge for the death of his father, Ommaya bin Khalaf.

When Zaid was going to be beheaded Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb spoke to him thus: "O Zaid, I abjure thee by God! Would not you like that Muḥammad was in your place now and we were cutting off his head instead of yours, and you were with your family?" Replied Zaid: "By God, I would not like that even a thorn should prick Muḥammad in the place where he is now and that I should be with my family." Abu-Sufyán wondered greatly at this, and said: "By God, I have never seen anyone loved so dearly as Muḥammad is by his companions." Zaid was beheaded.

The other prisoner, Khubaib, was taken out to be hanged so that the whole of the population of Mecca (a good many of whom had witnessed the previous execution) might see it. Khubaib asked permission to say two Rak'at of prayers but he made them very short so that the disbelievers might not say that he was afraid of death. He was also put to death.

These martyrdoms sealed the fate of Mecca. Zaid and Khubaib wished for no better end to their lives, for there is no greater reward in Islám than martyrdom and they got it. Perhaps they had prayed for it at Oḥod. Who knows ?

Muḥammad and his companions were stricken with grief at the loss of their faithful friends ; and Ḥassan, Muḥammad's poet, wrote elegies on their death.

THE SILENCE OF EUROPEAN BIOGRAPHERS ON ATROCITIES COMMITTED ON MUSLIMS

THE writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* who is so loud in denouncing the killing of the traitors mentions this murder of six Muslim missionaries and of seventy others which followed it in the following two sentences :

" As a religion Islám did not attract the Arabs ; they had no inclination to pray, read the Koran, and give alms. Of this they had given sufficient evidence by their perennial feuds with Mohammed, and by the murder of divers of his missionaries who were sent to teach them the faith." And this note is put in the events relating to the time of Muḥammad's life when Islám was spreading very fast in Arabia. Truly, the historian who wishes to pervert facts by putting them in the wrong places and by avoiding details has a vast field of falsehood open to him. It is true that the pagan Arabs did not understand Islám and every year they fought Muḥammad. It is also true that they decoyed six Muslims in one case and seventy in another and murdered them. But the way the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* puts it is not true

and he knows this fact as he gives references to books (Vákidī, pp. 153-57, Bīr Ma'una and al-Raji').

The disbelievers of Mecca were the victims of their ignorance which may be excused but the anti-Muslim Christians and Jews know the facts.

THE MURDER OF 70 MUSLIM MISSIONARIES AT BIR MA'UNA

ONE of the saddest events in the history of Islám is the murder of seventy of its Ḥuffáz (men who knew the Qurán by heart) and teachers of Faith. The pen of a Muslim revolts from writing the details but perhaps these men, like others, had prayed for martyrdom and not tasted it at Badr or Oḥod. In Ṣafar (the 2nd month of 4 A. H., May-June, 625 A. C.) not many days after the murder of the first batch of six missionaries of Islám, a man named Abu Bará' 'Ámir bin Málik came to Medīna and asked for enlightenment in the faith of Islám, and after he had been instructed therein, he requested for teachers to be sent to his place. The Prophet said he was afraid of the people of Nejd doing harm to his missionaries. Abu-Bará', who was reputed to be a man of his word, undertook to protect the missionaries. The word of an Arab, though a disbeliever was more than his bond, and the Prophet sent seventy men learned in Islám, and knowing portions of the Qur-án by heart, to preach Islám in Nejd. He thought, no doubt, that Nejd would prove to be another Medīna and that Islám would spread there. He was doing his duty.

The missionaries reached a place called Bīr Ma'una

midway between the land of Banu 'Ámir and Banu Sulaim. The cousin of Abu-Bará' named 'Ámir bin Ṭufail instigated the chiefs of Banu Sulaim named Ra'l, Dhakwán and 'Aṣiyya to murder the missionaries and they were all murdered with the exception of one man named 'Amr bin Ummayya.

When the latter was returning to Medīna he met two men of Banu 'Ámir and killed them, thinking that they were his enemies. But Banu 'Ámir were in league with Muḥammad and the Jews of Medīna. When Muḥammad and his companions heard this news of a double tragedy they were plunged in deep grief but what could they do? They could spare no men to go out from Medīna to avenge the death of their comrades. Therefore, for a whole month, Muḥammad and his companions added what is known as *Du'á Qunūt* to their morning prayers asking God for the forgiveness of their sins, for His Mercy and expressing fear of God's punishment; for God's punishment is sure to overtake the guilty.

MUHAMMAD IN A MOST DIFFICULT POSITION AFTER THE MURDER OF HIS MISSIONARIES

What with the loss of seventy warriors at Oḥod and scores of wounded; what with the murder of seventy-five missionaries and of a courier named Ḥarám bin Milhán sent to 'Ámir bin Ṭufail, and the unconcealed ridicule of the Jews, Muḥammad's position at Medīna had become one of extreme danger in which he and his fellow-believers stood a most likely chance of being annihilated. His

followers had increased in numbers at Medīna but his enemies had increased twenty-fold. At Mecca, the fight was between Belief and Disbelief only; at Medīna, the fight was between Belief on one side and Disbelief, Hypocrisy, Intrigue and Treachery on the other. Even the Arabs had become treacherous. All the evil passions that mankind is capable of were now let loose against one man—Muḥammad.

> And in this way have We made for each prophet enemies out of the guilty...
>
> (Qur-án, 25 : 31.)

Muḥammad thought out the situation and resolved upon a course to extricate himself. He had to pay indemnity for the killing of two men of Banu 'Ámir with whom he had a treaty. According to the treaty signed between him and the Jews, each community had to pay its share.

Banu Naḍīr were allied to Muḥammad and Banu 'Ámir. Muḥammad with ten of his picked men including Abu-Bakr, 'Omar and 'Alī went to their quarters and asked them to contribute their share. They received him with a show of great courtesy and friendship and made him sit down below a high wall.

Muḥammad, as usual, was all eyes and ears and he saw them whispering together in a suspicious manner. As a matter of fact they were considering that this was a good occasion to revenge the death of Ka'b bin Ashraf who had been previously killed by the Muslims. So they sent one 'Amr bin Jiḥásh bin Ka'b to throw down a big stone on Muḥammad from the top of the wall and to kill

him. Muḥammad's suspicions were now confirmed by their movements. He got up from his place leaving his companions behind, and, without saying a single word, he came back to Medīna by himself.

His companions got news of Muḥammad's return to Medīna and they also returned to Medīna when Muḥammad informed them as to what he had heard and seen, and what had been revealed to him by God. The Jews tried to summon him back to their place but Muḥammad refused to go. Instead, he sent them Muḥammad bin Maslama with this message from himself:

"Ye Banu Naḍīr! leave my territory. By your plot against my life, you have broken your agreement which you made with me. I give you ten days' time. If I see any of you after that I will strike off his head."

The Jews had nothing to say. They did not deny the allegation of the plot which by this time had become undeniable as it was concocted so hastily and so rashly that it could not be concealed.

IBN UBBAYY ONCE AGAIN

WHILST Banu Naḍīr were thinking out matters, two messengers came to them from Ibn-Ubbayy and said:

"Don't leave your territory and your belongings but remain within your fortifications. I have two thousand of my people, and many Arabs besides, who will come into your fortifications and die to the last man before any harm comes to you."

Banu Naḍīr held consultations and planned to go

out to Khaibar and wait till the fruit season, when they would come back again to their homes. The oldest amongst them named Huyayy bin Akhṭab said: "Never! instead, we will send word to Muḥammad that we will not leave our territory and our belongings. Let him do what he thinks fit. We will enter our fortifications. We will pelt anyone who comes near. Our food and drink will last us a whole year and Muḥammad cannot go on besieging us for a year." Ten days passed and nothing happened. The Jews did as their chief had advised them. Muḥammad was forced to besiege them. When anyone approached their fortifications they pulled down part of their own houses and threw the stones on the besiegers.

BANISHMENT OF BANU NADIR: 4 A.H.

MUHAMMAD ordered the cutting down of their fruit trees and lo! all the stratagem of the Jews fell to the ground. No help came from either Ibn-Ubbayy or the Arabs. The Jews consented to leave Medīna, if their lives and property were guaranteed. Muḥammad allowed them to do so. They pulled down their houses with their own hands, took as much of their belongings as they could and emigrated to Khaibar where they had lands of their own.

The Muslims obtained 50 pieces of mail armour, 340 swords and their lands. As no real fighting had taken place in this contest, Muḥammad, by God's order, distributed the booty amongst the poor Muhájirīn and two of the Anṣár, namely, Abu-Dujána of Oḥod fame and Sahl bin Ḥunaif.

The banishment of the Jews is described in Chapter 59 of the Qur-án called " Emigration ", and is worth quoting in full.

> All that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth declares the glory of God,
> For He is all-Mighty, all-Wise.
> It is He who turned out those who choose disbelief from amongst the people of the Book. (The Banu Naḍīr) from their homes on the occasion of the first emigration.
> You did not think that they would go out and they thought that their strongholds would defend them against God,
> But God came to them whence they had not thought (it possible),
> And He put fright into their hearts (so that) they destroyed their own houses with their own hands and the hands of the faithful.
> Therefore take a lesson, O ye possessed of eyes!
> And had not God prescribed banishment for them He would surely have caused them to suffer in this world.
> And there is for them in the Future the agony of the fire.
> This is so because they opposed God and His messenger, and whoever opposes God, then surely God is severe in respect of the consequences.
> Whatever palm-trees you cut down or left standing on their roots it was with the knowledge of God and that He might disgrace the disobedient.
> And as to the spoils of war, from those people, which God has entrusted the messenger with, they were not then the result of your persevering onward against

> them with horse or camel,
> But God gives authority to His messenger over whom He pleases ;
> For God is Capable of doing all He pleases.
> As to the spoils which God has entrusted His messenger with, from the people of the towns, the same belong to God and His messenger, and the near relations and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer,
> In order, that it (wealth) may not be circulating amongst those who are rich amongst you...
>
> (Qur-án, 59 : 1 to 7.)

Verses 8 and 9 state that the spoils belong to the poor Muhájirīn and Anṣár and praises the Anṣár for their preferment of the Muhájirīn to themselves. Verse 10 describes the lying promises of Ibn-Ubbayy to Banu Naḍīr :

> If you go forth we will certainly go forth with you and we will never obey any (outsider) with regard to you, and if you are fought against we will surely help you.
> And God bears witness to the fact that they most surely are liars.
>
> (Qur-án, 59 : 11.)

Verses 13-15 say that the Muslims have established fear in the hearts of the Jews who will never fight Muslims except in fortified towns.

Verse 16 compares the hypocrites to the evil-doer (Satan) who says to man : " Disbelieve "; and when man disbelieves Satan departs, leaving the disbeliever to himself.

It is thus that the disbelievers dig the graves of their own burial by playing false with God. No one can win against God.

MUHAMMAD CAUSES ZAID TO LEARN HEBREW AND SYRIAC

MUHAMMAD was now in as much need of writers as warriors. Foreign writers were treacherous. He caused Zaid bin Thábit to learn Hebrew and Syriac so as to be able to carry out his correspondence in these two languages and to interpret it to him when letters came from outside written in these two languages. It is this very Zaid who helped in the collecting of the chapters of the Qur-án in the Caliphate of Abu-Bakr, the first Caliph ; and Muslims are obliged to him for the purity and preservation of the Qur-án as much as to anyone else amongst the followers of Muḥammad.

MUHAMMAD PREPARES TO MEET ABU-SUFYAN AT BADR : 4 A. H.

MUHAMMAD thanked God for giving him a respite from the Jews. The Muhájirīn and Anṣár were also relieved from worry on account of their terrible poverty. The Muslims took to cultivating the land left by the Banu Naḍīr. But really there was no peace for Muḥammad. He had to meet Abu-Sufyán's threat to fight him at Badr a second time.

The year, however, proved to be a year of scarcity of food-stuffs, and Abu-Sufyán in his heart of hearts was for postponing the battle till the next year.

He, however, hit upon a plan to frighten the Muslims. He sent one Nu'aim to Medīna saying to the Muslims:

"The Quraish have collected an army against which no army in the whole of Arabia can stand. Those who fight this new army will find out that what happened at Oḥod was a mere nothing compared with what will happen to them now."

The news had a temporary effect. The Medinites were tired of fighting. The majority were inclined to stay at home and cultivate their fields. But Muḥammad had given his word to Abu-Sufyán to meet him at Badr (on the festival fair of the Arabs there) to fight out the issue between Faith and Disbelief. When he saw people trying to shirk the issue, his righteous anger rose to its height and he swore that he would go to Badr even if he had to do so alone. In another tradition it is said that he declared that he would fight till his flesh was torn off his bones.

MUHAMMAD AT BADR BUT NOT ABU-SUFYAN: *Rajab 4 A.H. = October 625 A.C.*

MUHAMMAD'S wrath was the wrath of God. His followers obeyed immediately, for they knew that he would carry out his word and they really never wished to disobey him. In fact, this anger re-doubled their preparations. Every man who could carry arms was ready for the march with enthusiasm.

Muḥammad appointed 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa (or some say 'Abdullah bin 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy) as governor

of Medīna in his absence and set out for Badr at the head of 1500 soldiers. This time he had 10 horsemen and 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib was the standard-bearer.

When news of this army reached Abu-Sufyán he also set out with an army of two thousand men but he had no food-stuffs except pounded oat-meal and hence his army was called "The army of Oat-meals". He had only 50 horsemen. When he reached 'Asfán, and found out the full strength of Muḥammad's forces and knowing how the Muslims had fought at Badr and Oḥod and also having been impressed by the courage and devotion of Muḥammad's followers, he thought discretion was the better part of valour and returned to Mecca.

His excuse was the lack of food-stuffs and the inadvisability of fighting in such a year of famine. Muḥammad remained for full 8 days at Badr and his followers made a profitable exchange of goods. This was the end of the 7th month (Rajab) of 4 A.H. Muḥammad returned to Medīna in Sha'bán 4 A.H. (November 625 A.C.).

The Qur-án on the Second Expedition of Badr

(There are) those who, after having been battered (in war) responded to the call of God and the prophet—for those, amongst them, who do good and are reverent, there is a great reward.

Those to whom men said:
"Surely the people have gathered against you
So fear them."
Then (this saying) increased their faith

And they replied:—
"God is sufficient unto us
And what an excellent Protector (is He)."
Hence they returned with the blessing of God and (His) grace,
No evil touched them,
And they followed God's approbation;
For God is the possessor of great grace.
This evil-one (meaning Abu-Sufyán) can only frighten his friends,
Ye (Muslims)!
Then fear them not but fear Me,
If you be faithful. (Qur-án, 3 : 171 to 174.)

Abu-Sufyán did not succeed in frightening Muḥammad and his followers but he did succeed in frightening his own army by saying that he had not sufficient food-stuffs to go to Badr. Abu-Sufyán was a most cunning man. He was only waiting for a favourable turn to attack Muḥammad and his devoted band of followers. And the opportunity came in a more startling manner than anyone expected. But more of this hereafter.

OTHER EVENTS OF THE YEAR 4 A. H.

IMAM HUSAIN BIN 'ALI BIN ABU-TALIB was born in this Fourth Year of the Hegira. This year also witnessed the death of the Prophet's grandson 'Abdullah bin 'Othmán bin 'Affán at the age of six. A cock pecked the boy's eye and the wound becoming septic, the lad died of it.

Zainab bint Khuzaimah also died this year. Abd us-Salám Makhzūmi died leaving Umm-Salama, his widow, whom the Prophet married this very year.

The holy Prophet and the Muslims now settled down to look after their affairs : the Prophet teaching and preaching the Qur-án and the people trying to make a living out of their scanty means. The second expedition of Badr seemed to have frightened the enemies of Islám. But, in reality, the embers of the hatred of the Jews and disbelieving Arabs were being blown into a *bonfire* by the addition of fresh fuel of all the wild tribes of Arabia.

CHAPTER XV

THE FIFTH YEAR OF HEGIRA

(3rd April 626 to 23rd March 627 A.C.)

THE EXPEDITION OF DHAT-AR-REQA'

THE Fifth Year of the Hegira began quietly but Muḥammad was not sleeping. In obedience to God's command "O ye who believe! take your precautions," he was always on the lookout for dangers ahead and taking the initiative in avoiding them. He was the captain of the ship of Islám. He had to keep the ship on its Right Course and to avoid all rocks and shallows. He could not avoid occasional storms but with a steady hand on the helm he had navigated it safely through the seas of Doubt, Disbelief and Distress. He now got a signal that a party of the tribe of Ghaṭafán were gathering a host to fall upon him. Without losing a moment he led 400 of his men till he reached a place called Dhát-ar-Reqá'. There he found a party of Banu Muḥárib and Banu Th'álaba of Ghaṭafán gathered together. But they were not expecting Muḥammad to be there.

His sudden appearance amidst their villages took them by surprise; and not being ready to fight they dispersed leaving their womenfolk behind. The object of the expedition was merely to prevent the enemy from

raiding Medīna. Muḥammad did not pursue the enemy or capture any of their women or children or do any other injury to their property. The Muslims returned towards Medīna with nominal booty. Muḥammad kept guards all the way even when he was praying; and the prayers were cut short for fear of any of the disbelievers attacking him suddenly. Half the people, with their arms on, would say one Rak'at with him whilst the other half kept guard. Then the first half would retire and complete the prayer by performing one more Rak'at by themselves whilst the guard would advance and pray with Muḥammad.

However, no enemy harassed them on their return journey. In Rabī'ul-Awwal (3rd month) of this year about July 626 A. C. Muḥammad got news of danger looming in the north. The season was hot and the Arabs only journeyed north in winter. The reader would also have noticed that both Badr and Oḥod were fought in winter. Journey in summer in North Arabia is like courting death. But Muḥammad would not wait and let his enemies surprise him.

He marched towards a place called Dumat al-Jandal, midway between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. It was full ten stages from Medīna. Muḥammad took a guide from Banu Azara. He had to travel by night and rest by day as the heat was terrific. Only he and his followers could undertake such an arduous journey.

The Muslims encamped one day's journey from Dumatal-Jandal and captured some cattle of the enemy. The governor of Dumat al-Jandal fled and Muḥammad

after sending scouts to various quarters returned to Medīna. There had been no rain this year. Water and pasture were scarce. On the way back, an Arab chief asked Muḥammad's permission to pasture his cattle near Medīna. Muḥammad allowed him to do so with great pleasure. The name of this chief was 'Ūyaina bin Ḥiṣn.

THE EXPEDITION OF BANU MUSTALIQ : 5 A.H.

ABOUT this time, a Beduin brought news to Muḥammad that Banu Muṣṭaliq, a branch of Banu Khuzá', were gathering people to make a raid on Medīna with the express purpose of killing Muḥammad. They were under the command of Hárith bin Abi Ḍirár. This news was confirmed from other sources. Muḥammad with his usual alacrity set forth immediately.

Abu-Bakr was the standard-bearer of the Muhájirīn and Sa'd bin 'Ubáda of the Anṣár.

Muḥammad reached a place called Muraisi' near Banu Muṣṭaliq. A fight took place. Ten of the Banu Muṣṭaliq and one Muslim were killed. But the enemy could not stand the onslaught of the Muslims and fled leaving their women and children behind them. The Muslims took possession of all that was left behind, including the women and children and returned to Medīna.

IBN-UBBAYY'S ATTEMPT TO CAUSE DISSENSION AMONGST MUSLIMS

AFTER the fight was over, a groom of 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb and a Muslim of Khazraj quarrelled at a

watering place and began to fight with each other. 'Omar's servant called the Muhájirīn for help and the man of Khazraj called his companions. 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy, who was with Muḥammad in this expedition, heard their cries and said to his associates amongst the Jews: "We will drive the Muhájirīn out of our territory. By God, our and their case is like the saying of old, 'Fatten thy dog, he will eat thee,' and by God, when we return to Medīna the nobility thereof (meaning the Jews) must drive out the mean people (meaning Muhájirīn) therefrom. News of this talk was carried to Muḥammad and his companions. 'Omar was for killing Ibn-Ubbayy at once, then and there, but Muḥammad calmed him by saying: "How would you like to hear people say, 'Muḥammad kills his own companions'?"

Muḥammad ordered the march of his army without delay. They all returned to Medīna by forced marches—tired and much vexed at heart by the saying of Ibn-Ubbayy. Ibn-Ubbayy on oath denied having said the words attributed to him but God revealed to Muḥammad that he was a liar. The first section of Chapter 63 of the Qur-án relates to this incident where Ibn-Ubbayy's saying is quoted: "If we return towards Medīna (lit. the city) the mighty will expel the humble therefrom."

Ibn-Ubbayy's son, 'Abdullah

WHEN 'Abdullah bin-Ubbayy (who was a good Muslim) knew the facts about his father's disgraceful conduct he asked Muḥammad's permission to cut off his father's

head lest, if anyone else did it, he might kill the killer and go to hell. Muḥammad forgave Ibn-Ubbayy.

MUHAMMAD MARRIES JUWAIRIYA BINT HARITH

WHEN the Muslims reached Medīna they divided the booty. Amongst the prisoners was Juwairiya bint Ḥárith, the leader of Muḥammad's enemies amongst Banu Musṭaliq. She fell to the lot of one of the Anṣár. She being the daughter of a chief wanted to redeem herself and gave a writing to her master. She was certain that her father would pay whatever was wanted. She came to Muḥammad—and he was in 'Áisha's house—and said: "You know who I am and to whose lot I have fallen. I have given him a writing to redeem myself and I want your help." Muḥammad redeemed her. Soon after this, Ḥárith himself came to Medīna and both father and daughter became Muslims and Ḥárith gave Juwairiya in marriage to Muḥammad.

On hearing this news, all the companions of Muḥammad released their prisoners and gave back the booty to their owners in honour of the marriage and on account of respect for the relations of Muḥammad's wife. 'Áisha said about Juwairiya, "I know no woman who has been a greater blessing to her people than Juwairiya."

IBN-UBBAYY'S FALSE RUMOURS AGAINST 'AISHA

ON the way back to Medīna from Banu Musṭaliq and on the last day of the journey, it happened that when the

caravan stopped at its resting place, the Prophet gave orders for its sudden departure. It was night time and dark. 'Áisha had accompanied Muḥammad in this expedition. She travelled on a separate camel reserved for her, inside a *Maḥmal* which was covered all over. At the time of the departure of the caravan, she had gone out to answer the call of nature and had not yet returned. She was extremely light of weight, and the camel drivers thinking she was in, took up her empty *Maḥmal* and put it on camel back and the caravan left. When she returned she found herself alone and it was late at night. She stopped where she was, thinking that the camel-drivers would find out their mistake and come back for her. But no one came. When morning arrived, Ṣafwán bin Mu'aṭṭal, who was especially deputed by Muḥammad to follow the caravan at some distance in order to look after things left behind, saw her and on being told what had happened he gave her his camel and himself walked on foot guiding the camel on its way to Medīna. 'Áisha reached home quite safe and sound, and when the incident was related everyone was satisfied. But Ibn-Ubbayy (and others joined him) took advantage of the incident and sought to spread rumours, affecting her character. 'Áisha felt it terribly and became sick. Muḥammad was also in great embarrassment and was much annoyed by the people's evil tongues.

'Áisha was crying as if her heart would burst. She went and stayed with her mother who knowing her innocence consoled her.

Muḥammad held a full and thorough inquiry into

the matter in the presence of his companions and found that 'Áisha was innocent.

Muḥammad went to console her and even hinted that God forgave all sins on repentance to which 'Áisha replied: "I know I am innocent and on no account will I acknowledge what the people say and I will not ask pardon in this matter, for God knows I am innocent and I will say what the father of Joseph said: 'Patience is noble and I ask God for help against what you describe' (Qur-án 12 : 18).

'Áisha remained firm against all accusations and she gave only one answer to all. "I know that I am innocent and that God is not unjust." But her parents were so grief-stricken that they very nearly died of it. In this severe trial of 'Áisha, there is an example for all innocent women. They must not yield to people's accusations when they are innocent, for God is their Protector. The faithful believed 'Áisha to be innocent and God sent the following revelation to confirm her innocence and also as a warning to her accusers.

> Those who have brought forth the lying accusation are a group from among you.
> Do not consider this thing an evil for you.
> On the contrary it is good for you.
> Each man of them has his share of what he has earned of the sin,
> And he who has taken the chief part amongst them has a grievous suffering. (Qur-án, 24 : 11.)

Other passages follow and warn Muslims against giving credence to such lying reports. The chief conspirators were given 80 stripes each as a punishment

for their false accusations. 'Áisha returned to her home and was ever happy afterwards. The whole Muslim world owes her a debt of gratitude for her firmness in the matter and for the clear way the law of evidence is laid down for all time to come with regard to such accusations. The Jews accused 'Áisha, as they had formerly accused Mary, mother of Jesus, whom also God had declared to be innocent:

> And for their (the Jews) disbelief and their saying against Mary a great slander. (Qur-án, 4 : 156.)

Mary is called "The Truthful Woman" and so is 'Áisha. Her father Abu-Bakr had earned the title of "The Truthful" whilst he was still at Mecca.

THE BATTLE OF THE ALLIES OR CONFEDERATES ALSO CALLED THE BATTLE OF THE FOSSE

5 A.H.—Winter of 626-627 A.C.

THE Fifth Year of the Hegira had so far been an extremely prosperous one for Muḥammad and the Muslims. They had been, thanks to the foresight and energy of the Prophet, successful in all their ventures. Muḥammad had broken up all his enemies and Medīna had been free from raids. He was very happy at the result of his endeavours for the welfare of his followers and for their undiminished support of his plans.

The Muslims were also happy because they were materially better off than before and their numbers had increased and Banu Naḍīr and Banu Qainuqa' had been banished from Medīna and the Meccans had not

ventured to come out at the second battle of Badr (winter of 626 A.C.=4 A.H.). Nor had they ventured to do anything in 5 A.H.

There was every reason to believe that the storms of war had passed over the ship of Islám and that Muḥammad might expect "fine weather" ahead.

But it was really a lull before the storm. Muḥammad's enemies had taken a leaf out of his own book. Up till now, Muḥammad had been springing surprises upon them; but now they would spring a surprise upon him.

Banu Naḍīr, who had been banished from Medīna, had gone to live at Khaibar. They were a rich community and had in their leader Huyayy bin Akhṭab an inveterate foe of Muḥammad.

He sent emissaries all over Arabia to form a coalition of all the Jews and all the disbelievers against Muḥammad. The negotiations were carried on so secretly and so successfully that Muḥammad knew nothing about them. The Jews assured the pagan Arabs that they preferred their (the pagans') religion to that of Muḥammad and that they would never make any peace with Muḥammad.

> And they (the Jews) say in favour of those who have chosen disbelief—
> "These are better guided than the (true) believers in the (right) path." (Qur-án, 4 : 51.)

Subscriptions were opened and the Jews and the Meccans subscribed handsomely. Banu Naḍīr did not leave a single notable tribe of the disbelieving Arabs

whom they did not bring into their Federation. The following tribes amongst others were the allies of the Jews, *viz.*, Ghaṭafán, Banu Murra, Banu Fazára, Ashjá', Sulaim, Banu Sa'd, Banu Asad, all of whom wanted to revenge themselves upon Muḥammad. Muḥammad had been to their territories one after the other but they came together to his territory. It was a fight of Muḥammad against the whole of Arabia. The forces of the Allies or Confederates consisted of :

1. The Quraish under Abu-Sufyán :
   (*a*) 4000 foot-soldiers, all well-armed.
   (*b*) 300 horsemen in full armour.
   (*c*) 1500 camels loaded with provisions.

The standard of the Quraish was given to 'Othmán bin Ṭalḥa.

2. Banu Fazára under the leadership of 'Ūyaina bin Ḥiṣn (whom Muḥammad had allowed free pasturage near Medīna) with hundreds of followers and 1000 camels.
3. Ashjá'—400 warriors.
4. Murra—400 warriors.

Ḥárith ibn 'Auf was the leader of Banu Murra whilst Mis'ar bin Rukhailah was that of the Ashjá'.

5. Banu Sulaim (of Bīr-Ma'ūna ill-fame who had murdered 70 Muslims) came out with 700 warriors.

And as this army moved on to Medīna, Banu Sa'd and Banu Asad joined it, bringing its numbers to over 10,000 men. Well might Abu-Sufyán now boast that he had got together an army which Arabia had never

witnessed before and which was irresistible, and compared with which the 3000 Quraish warriors at Oḥod were a mere nothing. And there was the moral support of the wonderful union against Muḥammad. It seemed to the disbelievers as if the sands of Muḥammad's life had run out and that there was nothing left to him except surrender or death.

THE PITIABLE PLIGHT OF THE MUSLIMS AT MEDINA : 5 A.H.

WHEN the Muslims heard of this huge army with its hundreds of horsemen; its thousands of camels; its stores of arms and supplies; and the union of all the Arabs and the Jews, they were thunderstruck. The whole of Arabia was up in arms to strangle them to death and to wipe them off the surface of the earth. There was no possibility now of meeting the enemy in the open. But would being besieged be of any use to them either? They would be trapped in Medīna like rats in a cage and then murdered with their women and children; and their hearts and livers would be taken out of their corpses and chewed by Hinda and her companions (Hinda was with Abu Sufyán).

THE FOSSE A SURPRISE FOR ABU-SUFYAN

BUT the Muslims had Faith. When the first shock of the news was over, they set to work. The army of the Allies or Confederates was already on the march when the Muslims heard of it. It reached Medīna six days after. So that the Muslims had six days to prepare for war.

Muḥammad held his counsel and decided quickly on fortifying Medīna. Salmán, the Persian, who had become a Muslim, suggested digging a trench on the side of Medīna where it was open to the enemy. A trench or fosse, five yards deep, five yards broad, and covering the whole length of the open side of Medīna was dug within six days. Behind this, protected on one side by the houses of Medīna and on the other by high ground was the Muslim camp in which the Prophet had his red tent. The length of the fosse was divided into equal portions and each portion was defended by ten archers. Banu Quraiẓah, a Jewish tribe who were still allied to Muḥammad and from whom Muḥammad borrowed hoes and other implements for digging the trench, lived on one side of Medīna in fortified quarters. Muḥammad worked with his own hands in digging the trench just like his followers. He was now 58 years old but still whole and hearty. The diggers found a boulder in one part of the trench which they could not dig. Muḥammad dug it out single-handed. He still had the strength of ten men and the resolution of a thousand. The Muslims had hardly finished digging the trench when Abu-Sufyán approached Medīna. He was elated at meeting no resistance and now Medīna lay under his eyes. He ordered a quick march on to Medīna with swords and bows drawn, drums beating, idols being praised and women shouting for the joy of victory and revenge which they thought was now certain. Muḥammad let them come on. "Muḥammad dare not fight us to-day; we will simply crush him," so

thought the disbelievers.

Suddenly, the horses stopped cantering and reared back; the camels would not go forward; the men gasped as they saw the trench before their eyes. They had never seen anything like it before. Here was a miracle of human ingenuity which 10,000 well armed soldiers could not over-ride.

THE SIEGE OF MEDINA: 5 A.H.

THE Allies had full supplies of arms and provisions. The Muslims had no supplies worth mentioning and they were actually between two fires—the Allies on the one and the Hypocrites and Banu Quraiẓah on the other.

Abu-Sufyán laid siege to Medīna with his Jewish allies of Banu Naḍīr. But the enthusiasm of his army had vanished. They had come for a day's fighting, easy victory, revenge and loot, and not for laying a siege of weeks and months. And if it was an ordinary siege, they could encircle the city, make a breach somewhere, and get in. But now there was this trench in front of them so broad and so deep that they could not pass it either on foot or on horseback. And there were Muḥammad's archers 3000 strong ready to shoot them. Woe unto the Quraish and woe unto the Jews who brought them to this grave of a trench! Would it not be better for them to go back and try it some other day? No, never again could there be such union of hearts and purses of the enemies of God.

Ḥuyyai Ibn-Akhṭab, the leader of Banu Naḍīr Jews, tried to emulate Muḥammad himself in organisation

and combining the strength of the Allies. He fortified their hearts by saying that Muḥammad would soon be starved out and that victory would be theirs. And indeed the Muslims were extremely short of supplies. The Allies had enough and the whole of Arabia was open to them. They pitched their tents.

The Muslims had to guard the trench by day and by night. Hungry and semi-starved they held to their posts like grim death.

One week passed, two weeks passed. The Allies made no progress. The Muslims showed no signs of weakening. It was now the month of Dhul-Qa'dah, 5 A.H. (February 627, or March, as some writers calculate). The nights were cold and a strong northerly wind was blowing, and rain was expected at any moment.

The Allies were becoming desperate. At last they found out a place where the trench was not so deep and broad as in other places. And Banu Naḍīr had started negotiations with Banu Quraiẓah and informed the Allies that Muḥammad would soon be set upon by them from behind.

The spirits of the Allies rose high and they attempted to take the trench by assault. They were led by (1) 'Amr bin 'Abdūd, (2) 'Ikramah bin Abu-Jahl and (3) Ḍirár bin Khaṭṭáb.

'Amr was the first to cross over. He challenged the Muslims to single combat. 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib came forward and responded to his call. "I don't want to kill you" said 'Amr. "But by God, I do" said 'Alī. 'Amr was killed in the fighting which took place between the

two. 'Amr was considered the strongest and the most skilled warrior in Arabia. The horsemen fled back defeated. The trench was badly damaged at this place and after dark Naufal bin 'Abdullah bin Mughīra tried to cross it again but his horse and himself were both killed and buried in the debris. Abu-Sufyán offered the usual blood money for the corpse of Naufal but the Prophet refused to trade in corpses.

THE ALLIES' INTRIGUES WITH BANU QURAIZAH

BECAUSE Force could not kill Muḥammad, Treachery must be employed, so thought the Jews. Huyyai bin-Akhṭab disclosed his plans to the Quraish and Ghaṭfán, and went to work with a will. He had an interview with Ka'b bin As'ad the leader of the Banu Quraiẓah. Ka'b, however, was extremely cautious. He would not open his door to Huyyai unless he knew that he and the Jews were going to benefit by the proposed negotiations. Huyyai said to him: "Woe to thee, O Ka'b! I have brought to thee the noblest men of the age, and an army as big as the sea—the Quraish and the Ghaṭfán with all their leaders and noblemen. They have pledged themselves with me, that they will not depart from Medīna till they have killed Muḥammad and those who are with him."

Ka'b at first hesitated, but woe to him, he, at last, gave in to Huyyai and thus sealed the fate of his own tribe. Huyyai made reckless promises of rewards to Banu Quraiẓah. He assured Ka'b that the fosse or trench alone stood in the way of the conquest of Medīna and as soon as Banu Quraiẓah opened their

doors to the Allies, Muḥammad would be finished.

The news of this proposed treachery reached Muḥammad who at once sent his emissaries to Ka'b reminding him how scrupulously and steadfastly Muḥammad had carried out his part of the agreement made with Banu Quraiẓah. Muḥammad had sent Sa'd bin Ma'ádh the leader of the Aus, Sa'd bin 'Ubádah the leader of Khazraj accompanied by 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥá and Khawwát bin Jubair.

Sa'd bin Ma'ádh who was an ally of the Banu Quraiẓah reminded them of their alliance with Muḥammad and asked them to send back Banu Naḍīr to their homes. But the Jews were already drunk with the wine of supposed victory and refused all advice. When the name of the Prophet of God was mentioned they said: "Who is the Prophet of God? There is no agreement between us and Muḥammad, and no pledge." The conversation ended in mutual abuse. It was arranged between the Allies and the Banu Quraiẓah that Muḥammad should be attacked by three separate detachments or squadrons, *viz.*, by

(1) Ibn-ul-A'waras-Sallami from the heights behind Muḥammad.

(2) 'Ūyaina bin Ḥiṣn from the flank.

(3) Abu-Sufyán from the trench or fosse.

It was in connection with this arrangement that the Meccans had started an assault on the trench. It was a kind of test for what was to come.

THE EFFECT OF THIS NEWS ON THE OPPOSING ARMIES

THE Allies were highly pleased with the news of the Quraiẓah turning traitors to Muḥammad and their courage rose accordingly. The Muslims were naturally much perturbed. The hypocrites who were with Muḥammad found it a good excuse to leave him and go back to their homes. The state of Muḥammad's army is most accurately described in the Qur-án:

> When they came upon you from above you and from below you
>
> And when the eyes flinched and the (beat of) hearts reached the throats and you fancied regarding God diverse fancies.
>
> There the faithful were tested and they were given a shaking—such a severe shaking.
>
> And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts there is a disease said: "God and His messenger have promised us nothing but a deception."
>
> And when a party of them said: "O ye people of Yathrib (Medīna)! there is no place for you (here), therefore go back."
>
> And a party of them began to ask the permission of the prophet (to go), saying: "Surely our houses are undefended."
>
> And they were not undefended, they only desired to run away.
>
> And if people had got entry into (the city) from its sides (and) come upon them and then asked them to join in a civil war they would have gone over to them and not hesitated therein but a little.

> And most surely they had already covenanted with God not to turn their backs ;
> And God's covenant will surely be inquired into.
> (Qur-án, 33 : 10 to 15.)

It is really a miracle that Muḥammad's followers could stand the strain. They now had not enough provisions to eat a decent meal a day and people had to bind stones on their stomachs to keep the pain of hunger down. The Spirit of God alone was sustaining their Faith in Him. Says God :

> And when the faithful saw the confederates they said : "This is what God and His messenger promised us and God and His messenger spoke the truth".
> And it increased them in nothing but faith and obedience. (Qur-án, 33 : 22.)

The greater the danger, the greater is the faith of a Muslim and the greater is his effort in the cause of Islám.

MUHAMMAD CONFOUNDS THE ALLIES AND BANU QURAIZAH

THE Jews and their allies made sure of victory. By no possibility, they thought, could Muḥammad escape destruction. They had surrounded him from above and from below. His companions gnawed their teeth in anger at having formerly let Banu Naḍīr escape so cheaply. The serpent which they had let go was bent on biting them to death. And it had invited its poisonous companions along with it to have a bite on the victim's body. To be clement to one's enemy, they thought, was to be an

enemy to one's self. But God was on the side of Muḥammad. The Jews of Banu Quraiẓah began to come out of their quarters and to spy on the women and children of the Muslims. One of them was found by Ṣafya bint 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and killed by her.

Muḥammad must do something more, than merely fight the enemy. A man named Nu'aim of Ghaṭfán had become Muslim but his conversion was not known to the enemy. He was also a friend of Banu Quraiẓah. Muḥmmad sent him to Ghaṭfán promising to give them one-third of the produce of Medīna if they retired. He then sent him to Quraiẓah. Nu'aim spoke to Quraiẓah of his former love for them and their regard for him and explained to them that Ghaṭfán and the Quraish could not go on for long in their siege and that they were settling terms with Muḥammad. He advised them not to take their side unless they gave them hostages for their good conduct. He then crossed over to the Quraish, who were also ignorant of his conversion, and told them that Quraiẓah had been ashamed of their desertion of Muḥammad and that in order to gain Muḥammad's goodwill they had offered to send him the heads of the nobles of the Quraish. Nu'aim advised the Quraish that if Banu Quraiẓah asked for any hostages, the Quraish must not send any.

Then he went over to his own people of Ghaṭfán and said to them exactly what he had said to the Quraish.

The Quraish and Ghaṭfán began to have doubts as to the fidelity of Banu Quraiẓah and in order to put the matter to the test Abu-Sufyán sent a messenger to Sa'd

of Quraiẓah saying :

" O Sa'd ! our staying here and our besieging this man (Muḥammad) has been prolonged, and I have decided that you attack him tomorrow and we will follow you (in attack)."

Quraiẓah's reply was :

"Tomorrow is Saturday and we will not work or fight on the Sabbath day."

Abu-Sufyán was hot with anger and sent back his emissary saying : " Keep your Sabbath in its place. It is absolutely necessary that we fight Muḥammad on the morrow. If we come out for fight and you be not with us we will be absolved from our pledge given to you and we will expose you to Muḥammad ! " When the Quraiẓah heard that, they were inflamed with anger and demanded hostages from the Quraish.

Abu-Sufyán had now no doubt left in his mind as to the truth of what Nu'aim had said. He tried the feelings of Ghaṭfán but they were also unwilling to advance against Muḥammad for reasons of their own.

GOD'S HELP TO MUSLIMS IN THE BATTLE OF THE FOSSE : 5 A.H.

THIS was the 27th day of the siege. And when the night came it was a Night of Terror. The wind blew a hurricane and rain poured down as if it was going to be another Deluge. Lightning blinded people's eyes and the Thunder which followed it put terror into the hearts of the unbelievers. Their tents were thrown down with the force of the wind. The animals scattered not knowing

where to go or where to stop. The cooking utensils of the besiegers were either broken or filled with mud. The enemies of Muḥammad were terror-struck, confused and helpless against the fury of the elements. They fancied that the Muslims had crossed the trench and were going to fall on them. Ṭulaiha bin Khwailad got up and cried: "Muḥammad's men are in your midst, save yourselves, save yourselves." And Abu-Sufyán cried out: "O people of the Quraish! I swear by God I am not going to stay here till the morning. The trotters and hoofs (meaning animals) are destroyed. Banu Quraiẓah have played false with us and have said things that are unpleasant. And you see what has happened to us on account of the force of the wind. Let us move away. I am surely going to do so."

The Quraish were all of his mind and rode their camels with as much or as little of their belongings as they could manage. The Ghaṭfán followed his example. The rain poured on and the wind continued till they were at a safe distance from Medīna. Muḥammad's companions knew nothing of this departure till the morning. When the morning came, they got ready to meet the enemy. But lo! there was no enemy to meet. The nightmare of Disbelief had vanished into the thin air. The promise of God was going to be fulfilled.

WHAT WAS IT THAT HAD BEEN PROMISED TO THE FAITHFUL? 5 A.H.

AT the time when the Muslims were digging the trench and had met with a boulder which no one could dig out

and which Muḥammad removed single-handed, Muḥammad had a vision. When Muḥammad struck the boulder with his iron instrument, sparks came out of the stone. At the first spark, Muḥammad saw that the Empire of Chosroes had been given to his followers. At the second, he saw that the Empire of the Cæsars had been given to his followers. He told the Muslims what he had seen and the news had reached the enemy. The enemies of Muḥammad, during the siege, were laughing at him saying that Muḥammad had promised two great Empires to his followers but if he wanted to ease himself he had no place to do so at daytime and had to wait till night. They were making fun of him but God paid them back in their own coin. They had to retreat at night in the midst of rain and storm:

> And God turned back those who disbelieved full of
> rage (in their hearts),
> They came to no good.
> And Sufficient is God to the faithful in respect of war...
> (Qur-án, 33 : 25.)

Muḥammad and his followers returned to their homes in Medīna, thanking God for the departure of the enemy.

> And God prevails in His command but most men know
> (it) not. (Qur-án, 12 : 21.)

Muḥammad began to think of the future. The enemy had this time been repulsed by God. The Jews, however, were capable of coming back again. They might choose a season which was not so bitterly cold and stormy.

And then what about Banu Quraiẓah? Had it not

been for God's help, where would have been Muḥammad and his men?—In their graves, with their bodies torn open. And their women and children?—Sold into slavery and in the hands of the disbelievers. And what of Arabia? It would have sunk again into barbarism, savagery, drunkenness, fornication and gambling. The very thought of these things must be ended. But what about his famished, tired and wearied followers? Surely, they required rest. No, not till God's word was established in the land.

On the forenoon of the day of his return from the fosse, the crier went round crying: "He who listens and obeys will not say the noon-prayers except in the quarters of Banu Quraiẓah."

The Muslims 'listened and obeyed' and led by 'Alī they approached the quarters of Banu Quraiẓah. Huyyai Ibn-Akhṭab was with the latter and they began to abuse Muḥammad in the most filthy language. Their insolence knew no bounds. They were still bent on killing Muḥammad. When Muḥammad came close to their quarters, 'Alī begged him not to go too near. "Why?" asked Muḥammad, "I fancy, I have heard they want to injure me."

"Yes", replied 'Alī.

Said Muḥammad: "When they see me they will not speak anything like that."

Muḥammad's righteous anger was now at its zenith. And his wrath was the wrath of God. No one dared raise his eyes and look at him when he was angry. The only way to subdue his anger was to read some

verse of the Qur-án. But that was only when he was in the midst of his own companions. To-day, he was facing the Jews. He went to their fortifications and called out to them: "Ye brethren of the apes! Do you wish that God should abase you and take revenge on you?"

They replied: "O Abul-Qásim! thou art not a fool."

THE FATE OF BANU QURAIZAH

THE Muslims came there in groups during the rest of the day, and Muḥammad ordered them to besiege the Quraiẓah. The besieged became the besiegers.

The siege of the Quraiẓah lasted for fifteen days. There was not much fighting in this war except throwing stones and shooting arrows. The Quraiẓah never dared to come out of their fortifications as God had already foretold when the Banu Naḍīr were banished.

When despaired of all help, they asked him to send one Abu-Lubába of Aus for consultation. Before Muḥammad's arrival at Medīna the Aus were the Allies of Banu Quraiẓah as the Khazraj were of Banu Naḍīr.

When Abu-Lubába reached them, the men, women and children of Quraiẓah began to cry and said: "O Abu-Lubába, do you think we should come down and surrender to Muḥammad?" He said: "Yes", and he pointed to his throat meaning that they would be killed if they did not.

Then their own leader Ka'b bin As'ad went to them and advised them to follow Muḥammad and save everything

—their lives, their property, their women and children. But they disdained to listen to this.

Then said Ka‘b: "Kill your women and children, come out and fight Muḥammad. If you win you will get back women and children. If you lose, you will have none to mourn your death." They refused that also. The fact was that they wanted to be allowed to leave Medīna as Banu Naḍīr had been allowed before. Muḥammad refused that. He had had enough of Banu Naḍīr and he was not going to risk his own life and the lives of his followers to another coalition of the Jews and the Quraish. Some of the Aus also pleaded for their former allies (the Quraiẓah).

Muḥammad allowed the Jews to choose an arbitrator. They chose Sa‘d bin Ma‘ádh. But they forgot that when Sa‘d had gone to them and asked them not to listen to Banu Naḍīr, they had abused him and enraged him by their conduct.

Sa‘d, before undertaking to arbitrate, took the most solemn oaths from both sides that they would abide by his decision. Both sides pledged themselves to do so. Sa‘d decided that all those who had fought against Muḥammad should be executed and the property and women and children should be divided as prizes of war. The order was carried out. Huyyai Ibn-Akhṭab, who was with the Quraiẓah, shared their fate.

The Justice of this Sentence

No one can dispute the justice of the sentence on the Quraiẓah. People may admire the courage of the

Quraiẓah in not accepting Islám and thus saving their lives, but no one can complain of the justice of this sentence. Traitors are always executed unless they ask pardon and circumstances justify the pardon being granted. That has been the history of mankind from its creation till to-day. There is no free pardon for traitors and spies. The traitor and the spy know what they are doing and what their fate would be if they are caught. They cannot complain of the very thing they are after, namely death. It is the traitor's desire to kill his former ruler and it is the ruler's business (if not his duty) to kill the traitor. Otherwise, there can be no peace in this world. For, if traitors knew beforehand that they were going to be pardoned, all governments would have rebellions on their hands. There is no form of government which can satisfy every body.

MUHAMMAD ABSOLUTELY FREE FROM BLAME

THE real culprit in this tragedy, for it was a most horrible tragedy, and every God-fearing man must wish that a thing like this may never happen, though happen it must sometimes, was Huyyai Ibn-Akhṭab. He instigated the Quraiẓah to join the Allies. It was he who came back to their fortifications and stirred them up again. When Muḥammad went to their fortifications had they asked his pardon they might have been pardoned. But they were insolent and wanted to kill him.

The most important point of all, however, is that the sentence of death was pronounced upon them by a man of their own choosing. Supposing this man had let

them free, Muḥammad would have been bound by his judgment. Some Muslim writers say that Sa'd had already been seriously wounded by the Allies of Banu Quraiẓah and could not walk and that he was carried by men to the place of arbitration. If so, it was a most deplorable matter for Banu Quraiẓah, but people who have committed such wrongs as they had done cannot put the blame on others if they meet their just dues. And it must be said to the credit of the Quraiẓah that they themselves never complained of the sentence pronounced upon them. It is the enemies of Muḥammad who unjustly complain of it.

But let these enemies ask themselves as to how many thousands of rebels and traitors have been shot in all recorded wars. What happened to the rebels (and even members of the royal family of Moghuls) after the mutiny of 1857? And people are daily being shot in riots and disturbances of peace all over the world.

Whoever has the government of a country must keep the peace of the country by all means at his disposal and Muḥammad did nothing but his duty in safeguarding the State of Medīna against treachery and corruption. His name stands blemishless and pure.

THE STORY OF RAIHANA

ONE of the captives of war was a woman named Raiḥána. It is said, by Christian writers, that Muḥammad offered her his hand in marriage if she became a Muslim but she refused and remained in his possession till she died. All the legends built upon this captive of war are absolutely

unfounded. There is no evidence that she was exceptionally pretty or that Muḥammad loved her. If he offered her his hand in marriage it was to protect her, not to benefit himself. The law as to marriages and the limit as to the number of wives had not yet been revealed to him and marriages were being performed according to the old Arabic custom. Time had not yet arrived for a final pronouncement on the subject.

OTHER EVENTS OF THE YEAR 5 A.H.

(1) In the 12th month of this year (Dhul-Ḥijj) Muḥammad despatched an expedition under Abu-'Obaida of 300 Muhájirīn towards the Red Sea to find out the condition of the people there. The Muhájirīn in this expedition suffered most terribly for want of provisions and had to be content with a few dates each, per day. On the coast of the Red Sea they found a big fish (probably a whale of some sort) on which they lived and recouped themselves.

(2) In this month also, Muḥammad bin Maslama was sent to punish Banu Kiláb. The expedition which consisted of 30 men only brought back 50 camels and 3000 goats.

(3) 'Akásha bin Muḥsin was sent towards Mecca as a scout.

(4) A small party went to Nejd and captured Thamáma bin Athál who became a Muslim. On his return to his country (Yamama) Thamáma stopped sending grain to Mecca. The Meccans complained to Muḥammad who sent word to Thamáma not to stop the

supply of grain to Mecca.

(5) Muḥammad recalled a number of emigrants from Abyssinia.

And thus ended one of the most fruitful years of Muḥammad's Life at Medīna.

The Battle of the Fosse had made him the virtual king of Arabia. But the victory was not yet complete. God has His own time for all events.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SIXTH YEAR OF HEGIRA

22-3-627 to 11-3-628 A.C.

IT has been stated in this book that the pagan Arabs were more frank in their hostility to Muḥammad, and less treacherous than the Jews. But alas! the Jews had infected them also. The murder of 75 missionaries, mentioned in the previous chapter, is a case in point, and also what follows:

The Expedition of Dhu-Qarad : Early 6 A.H.

ONE of the very worst examples of Arab treachery was the case of 'Ūyaina bin Ḥiṣn. After the expedition of Daumat-al-Jandal, this man, being short of pasturing grounds for his cattle, was allowed free pasturage near Medīna.

When the Allies invaded Medīna, he joined them with a large body of men and 1000 camels.

Early in this year, he raided Medīna, killed the caretaker of the camels of the Muslims, kidnapped his wife and looted the camels.

Salama bin 'Amr was the first to find this out. He shouted to the Medinites for help and himself pursued the robbers. Muḥammad was one of the first to hear him and he also followed Salama.

Many others were quick in pursuit of the raiders. A regular hunt took place. Muḥammad and his followers overtook the camels and brought back the kidnapped woman. This was only effected by the dexterity of one of Muḥammad's horsemen who cut the string which tied the Medinite woman's camel to the others. 'Ūyaina escaped and took shelter in the territory of hostile tribes.

Muḥammad on his way back to Medīna stopped at a place called Dhu-Qarad where he sacrificed a camel and returned home quite safe.

The Expedition of Fidak

EVER since Muḥammad had left Mecca, Banu Bakr had been one of his bitterest enemies. They had taken the part of the Meccans in all their expeditions against Muḥammad. They were now in communication with the Jews of Khaibar against him. To let them mature their plans would have been a disaster for the Muslims. And as usual, Muḥammad was beforehand in all his expeditions. He acted on the sound principle of letting his enemy have no time to mature his plans. Forewarned is forearmed. And Muḥammad believed in quick blows and knocking out the enemy first.

'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib, the Lion of God, was sent with 200 men to punish Banu Bakr and he overtook them at Fidak and routed them. 'Alī came back with a booty of 500 camels and 2000 goats.

THE CONVERSION OF ASBAGH BIN 'AMR KALBI

IN Sha'bán (the 7th month) of this year Muḥammad despatched 'Abd ur-Raḥmán bin 'Auf to Daumat-al-Jandal

to preach Islám. One of their chiefs named Aṣbagh bin 'Amr Kalbi, a Christian, was converted to Islám and gave his daughter named Tamáḍar in marriage to 'Abd ur-Raḥmán bin 'Auf.

THE TREACHERY OF THE BEDUINS

SOME of the inhabitants of a desert place belonging to the tribe of 'Ūkal came to Medīna and professed Islám. After living there for some time, they complained of itch and sickness. The Prophet sent them to the hills and fed them on milk. They became quite healthy and fat. Like 'Ūyaina, they also killed Muḥammad's camel driver and ran away with his camels.

Muḥammad despatched Kurz bin Khálid Fihri in their pursuit. The treacherous hypocrites were caught and executed.

DEVOTION TO GOD'S SERVICE

THE above-named expeditions, however, were a mere trifle in the lifework of Muḥammad. The object of his life was the propagation of Islám. Wars, which were a secondary matter, were imposed upon him by his enemies. If they had left him alone, there would have been no wars at all.

Since his arrival at Medīna, he hardly had peace for six consecutive months, and sometimes there was not a single month without its expeditions. No man had ever before been so harassed as Muḥammad was at Medīna. His own genius, God's help and the unfailing devotion of his followers had carried him through these years of perpetual

warfare with the Arabs and the Jews. And he had been successful in all his affairs. He defeated his enemies; his followers (both Muhájirīn and Anṣár) loved him as no man has ever been loved before or after. And as to his relations with God, they were completely harmonious. How could one man accomplish so much in such a short time and against such odds? Truly it is a most difficult question to answer. And the answer which God's Word suggests to the writer is contained in five words:

PURIFICATION OF THE HUMAN SOUL

And how was this purification effected?

By Prayer, Fasting, Charity and Love.

Let nobody suppose that because Muḥammad had to fight the Quraish he did not love them. His love for them increased with his years. He yearned to meet them and embrace them. They were his brethren and he was theirs. Let Muslims all over the world learn a lesson from his life. It is the bounden duty of every Muslim to love all mankind, but more especially those who are his countrymen, kinsmen and near relations. Islám is a Religion of Love and not of Hatred. And as the writer of this book is an Indian he would remind all Indian Muslims that they owe a sacred duty to their fellow countrymen without distinction of religion. Love of one's country and countrymen is part of the religion of Islám.

During the first eight years of Muḥammad's residence at Medīna he had received the following Suras or

Chapters of the Qur-án, *viz.*, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 24, 33, 47, 48, 57, 58, 56, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, and 65 from God on High.

Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 = $\frac{7\frac{3}{4}}{30}$th part of the Qur-án. 57 to 65 = (about) $\frac{1}{30}$th part of the Qur-án; 24, 33, 47 and 48 = (about) $\frac{1}{30}$th part of the Qur-án. On the whole, therefore, he had almost a third of the Qur-án revealed to him during the first eight years of the Hegira and it was coming to him in a continuous stream. He was learning it himself, teaching it to others and having it dictated, and each verse put into its proper place in each Sura. He never missed his prayers with the congregation; he never missed his fasts and as to charity he never kept anything with him for 24 hours running except the deposits of other people or debts which he owed.

People say he kept so many wives but do they know that, even though he was Administrator of Medīna, on occasions, there was no fire in his household for weeks and months? He lived on a handful of dates and milk whenever he could get any. If any booty or presents came to him, he distributed them immediately and though a rich man to-day he would be as poor tomorrow as any man ever was on this earth. His wives cried for earthly comforts and does the world know what the reply from God was to them? Here it is:

> O thou prophet! say to thy wives:
> " If you wish the life of this world and its ornaments then come ye, let me give you some of its enjoyments and part with you a noble parting.
>
> (Qur-án 33 : 28).

A man of the world desires riches. Muḥammad had plenty but never kept anything for his use or the use of his household.

A man of the world desires comfort and luxury. Muḥammad never knew what luxury meant unless it was to make others happy.

A man of the world desires to be worshipped by his fellowmen. Muḥammad gave strict orders to his followers not to praise him in the manner of the Christians who had raised Jesus to the skies. And in order to set an example of humility, he mended his own shoes; darned and washed his own clothes; served his children and womenfolk and worked with the Muslims as others did. He tended his horses and camels. He never missed visiting a sick person or a funeral. He was always contented though poor, and happy though hated by his enemies. He loved children, respected aged persons, was proverbially kind to women and generous to all. And with all these virtues he would ask God's pardon at least 70 times every day and very often hundreds of times per day. He humbled himself before God as if he was nothing but an atom of dust. He loved his followers more than they ever loved themselves.

> He is most solicitous for your welfare,
> (And) loving, merciful towards the faithful.
>
> (Qur-án, 9 : 128.)

And all this devotion, love, humility and generosity in Muḥammad was not for show. It was to please his Master who had made him what he was—"The purest ray of a gem serene".

It was all this and a great deal more that no man can describe which made him the beloved one of God, the lover of all creation and the magnetic soul of his followers. Muḥammad had purified his soul; and Abu-Bakr, 'Omar, 'Othmán and 'Alī and the rest of his companions were also purified and so were his household:

> God merely wishes to remove from you—the People of the House—all uncleanliness
> And He will purify you a complete purifying.
>
> (Qur-án, 33 : 33).

This purification was Muḥammad's life-work and it is this purification which will continue whenever people follow him rightly.

MUHAMMAD'S LONGING FOR HIS BIRTH-PLACE, MECCA

It was Muḥammad's superhuman energy that accomplished all he did. Idleness was unknown to his constitution and he would not let his followers be idle either. The day after the Battle of Oḥod, when his men had been battered, shattered and scattered, he collected them again and marched in pursuit of the enemy. The very morning of the retirement of the Allies from the Fosse at Medīna, he ordered a march on Banu Quraiẓah.

And in spiritual matters he was still more strict. Five daily prayers with the congregation ; long midnight prayers at home ; fasting 30 days in each year and an extra seven days after the 'Īd ; and then at least three fasts every month making a total of 70 fasts each year. But he said the ideal life was to fast every other day except in Ramaḍán when one must fast the whole month.

By such devotions he disciplined himself and his followers. There was one thing, however, and that the biggest of all, which was still lacking.

He had received the commandment to perform the pilgrimage (Qur-án 2 : 197-210 and 22 : 26-38), but the Meccans barred his way to the House of God. Muhammad, as usual, prayed to God for guidance and he saw in a dream (Shawwál, 6 A. H : December-January, 628 A. C.) that he was shaving his head after the pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is of two kinds: 'Umra (or the shorter Ḥajj) which may be performed at any season of the year by visiting the House of God, doing the necessary circuit of the Ka'ba, praying thereafter; running seven times between Ṣafa and Marwa and then shaving or cutting one's hair. The bigger Ḥajj includes this and going to 'Arafát on the 9th day of Dhul-Ḥijj and stopping two to three days thereafter at Miná; coming back to Mecca after sacrificing animals at Miná and doing the final circuit of the Ka'ba and then shaving or cutting one's hair.

What Muḥammad had seen in his dream was 'Umra or shorter Ḥajj with sacrificial animals to be offered to people in the Name of Allah and entry into Mecca without fighting.

Muḥammad naturally thought that his dream was from God and must be fulfilled though he had received no direct command as to the time and manner of its performance. But he made immediate preparations to visit Mecca as a pilgrim. But if he went, his followers must follow. They could hardly live without him.

When people asked him how the Quraish would let

him enter Mecca, in peace or by war, his reply was: "Certainly not by fighting and most surely in peace."

The people wondered greatly at this saying of Muḥammad. Must not they take their spears, bows and arrows with them? "No, nothing," said Muḥammad, "except the travellers' sheathed swords."

He sent word to all the neighbouring tribes asking them to accompany him and that he was going on Ḥajj in the sacred month of Dhul-Qa'da and not for fighting.

His real object was to make peace with the Quraish and thereby with the whole of Arabia. But the ordinary man has ordinary motives and does not realise the depth of a great man's soul.

MUHAMMAD SETS FORTH ON HAJJ: FEBRUARY, 628 A.C.

THE people's hearts also were full of joy at the expectation of their being able, after six years, to visit Mecca. Fourteen hundred men joined Muḥammad with 70 sacrificial camels especially marked and set apart, according to the custom of the Arabs.

He put on the Iḥrám (pilgrim's garb of two unsewn pieces of cloth, one for the upper part of the body and one for the lower) for 'Umra and set forth with the intention of visiting the holiest of the holy places on earth —the Ka'ba—the House of God rebuilt by Abraham and Ishmael and once more rebuilt by the Quraish in which rebuilding Muḥammad had taken the most prominent part by putting the Black Stone in its proper corner.

When he reached Dhul-Ḥulaifa, his companions also

put on the pilgrim's garbs; got their sacrificial animals ready, including Abu-Jahl's special camel captured at Badr. Umm-Salamah, wife of the Prophet, was with him in this journey.

THE QURAISH SWEAR AGAINST MUHAMMAD'S ENTRY INTO MECCA

WHEN the news reached the Quraish of Muḥammad's intended visit to Mecca they were extremely upset. They thought that this was a manœuvre on the part of Muḥammad to prove to the world that whilst the Quraish and their Allies could not get entry into Medīna, he could enter Mecca. They knew very well that Muḥammad had proclaimed to the world that he was coming for the Ḥajj and not for fighting during the sacred months, but their pride prevented them from acknowledging facts. They sent Khálid bin Walīd and 'Ikrama, each with 200 horsemen, to intercept Muḥammad and prevent his reaching the precincts of Mecca. Muḥmmad did not as yet know this and went straight on till he reached 'Asfán where he met a man of Banu Ka'b whom he questioned about the news of the Quraish. The man told him that they had heard of his coming; had put on the skins of leopards and sworn by Allah not to allow Muḥammad to enter their city on any account and that Khálid bin Walīd was not far off.

When Muḥammad heard this, he pitied the Quraish a great pitying. Here was he trying to make peace and preparing salvation for them and they were preparing to kill him. "What do the Quraish think? By God, I will continue

to struggle for the sake of God on the path He has set for me till He gives me the victory or this advance goes on."

MUHAMMAD IN A DILEMMA

BUT how was he to accomplish his object? He was on a mission of peace, and unarmed. The Quraish knew this and had sent Khálid and 'Ikrama to fight him and to boast of having defeated him. And he himself did not wish to fight on any account. He had come to perform his duty—to visit the Ka'ba, pay his vows and go back to Medīna.

Whilst he was absorbed in these thoughts two horsemen appeared on the horizon. They were the vanguard of the Meccan army. His way was barred. He must retreat immediately or perish. There seemed nothing else to do. He would not retreat and he did not want to perish. The faithful prepared to die to the last man and though they had nothing but swords they would fight. That, however, was not Muḥammad's intention or wish. He found a possible way out of the impasse.

He cried out: "Is there a man here who can lead us to a path other than the one on which are the enemy?"

A man came forward and led him on a way full of rough rocks through the ravines of Muḍnīya. The Muslims encountered the most harrowing difficulties in crossing this path but they reached Ḥudaibiya on the lower side of Mecca and within the sacred territory. Thus, both Khálid and 'Ikrama were outwitted and had God wished it, Muḥammad could, that day, have taken Mecca by storm. The Meccan army had been cut off

from Mecca by Muḥammad's manœuvre. But God did not wish any bloodshed in this sacred month and within this sacred territory. Muḥammad's she-camel named Qaṣwá stopped at Ḥudaibiya. People thought it was due to fatigue. But Muḥammad said: "No, He has stopped it who stopped the elephant (meaning the attack on Mecca, in the year of Muḥammad's birth by Abráha). If the Quraish ask me to-day for peace I will certainly grant them peace and the joining of uterine relations." And he asked the people to encamp there. They said: "O prophet of God! there is no water in this valley, how are we to encamp therein?" He took out an arrow from somebody's quiver. The arrow was shot into an old well which began to flow with water.

THE STUBBORNNESS OF THE QURAISH

THE Muslims stopped at Ḥudaibiya. The Quraish declared, on most binding oaths, that they would prefer death to allowing Muḥammad to enter Mecca. Meanwhile, Khálid bin Walīd and 'Ikrama also returned to Mecca. The Quraish sent some men under Budail bin Waraqá, a man of Khuzá', with the double object of finding out Muḥammad's forces and his intentions. The emissaries, on making inquiries and seeing the state of affairs with their own eyes, went back and asked the Quraish not to interfere with Muḥammad as he had come to carry out his religious duties. Fighting was forbidden during the sacred months and Muḥammad had no intention of fighting. The Quraish, instead of listening to the words of their emissaries, began to scold them.

They, then, sent other messengers who came back with the same story as their forerunners.

They then sent Ḥulais. Muḥammad put the seventy sacrificial camels (with their neck ornaments, being signs of sacrificial animals) in front of his men. Ḥulais was so impressed with this scene that he went back to the Quraish without seeing Muḥammad and told them what he had seen. The Quraish were angry. But so was Ḥulais who said: "If you do not allow Muḥammad, not one man of our tribe will come to Mecca."

The Quraish were afraid of the threat of Ḥulais. They found out a wise man named 'Urwá bin Mas'ūd whom they sent to Muḥammad. Abu-Bakr, Mughīra bin Shu'ba and others were near Muḥammad when 'Urwá arrived. 'Urwá spoke to Muḥammad in diplomatic language about Mecca being like an egg and if the egg was broken, the youth who were following him would leave him and that if war broke out between him and the Quraish the consequences to him (Muḥammad) would be serious. Abu-Bakr was enraged and said: "No, never, none of us would leave Muḥammad." 'Urwá whilst talking, had been pushing his hand too near the Prophet's beard and every time he did so Mughīra pushed his hand back. Mughīra did so in spite of the fact that he was deeply indebted to 'Urwá for having paid 13 blood-monies on his behalf. 'Urwá came back and assured the Quraish that Muḥammad's mission was a peaceful one and that he had come out of respect for the House of God and he further told them: " O people of the Quraish! I have seen Kesra, Cæsar and the Negus, each one in his

own kingdom. But by God, I have never seen any king amongst any people as I have seen Muḥammad amongst his companions. If he makes his ablutions they would not let the water thereof fall on the ground ; if a hair of his falls down they pick it up. They will not surrender him for anything in any case. Do what you please."

Time passed. Negotiations went on but nothing happened. Muḥammad sent a messenger to see the Quraish. They cut down his camel and would have killed him if some men of the Ḥulais' tribe had not interfered. Some foolish people amongst the Quraish numbering 40 to 50 came to his camp at night and pelted Muḥammad's men with stones. Muḥammad forgave them and forbade the shedding of blood within the precincts of Mecca. The Meccans were trying to provoke Muḥammad to fight but they failed.

'OTHMAN BIN 'AFFAN SENT TO THE QURAISH

MUHAMMAD was determined to leave no stone unturned in accomplishing his object of visiting the Ka'ba. He called 'Omar to go and see the nobles of the Quraish. 'Omar said : " O Prophet of God ! I am afraid of the enmity of the Quraish and there is no person of Banu 'Adī bin Ka'b to protect me. And you know my sayings against the Quraish and the enmity of the Quraish. I will suggest to you a person more deserving than myself — 'Othmán bin 'Affán". Muḥammad sent 'Othmán to Abu-Sufyán and the leaders of the Quraish. The first man 'Othmán met was Abán bin Sa'īd. 'Othmán put himself under his protection during the course of the

negotiations. When he saw the leaders of the Quraish they said: " O 'Othmán! if you wish to do the circuit of the House, do." He said: "I certainly will not do so till the Prophet of God does it. We have come to visit this ancient House and we wish to show our respect to God and do our duty and we have our sacrificial animals. When we have sacrificed them, we will return to Medīna." The Quraish said that they had sworn not to allow entry to Muḥammad. The negotiations were prolonged and rumour spread that 'Othmán had been killed.

The rumour of 'Othmán's murder reached the Muslims and there was a stir in the Muslim camp as there never had been a stirring before. The Prophet also thought that 'Othmán was murdered as there was no news to the contrary. If so, the Quraish had been guilty of the most heinous sin of the murder of an Arab Chief in the sacred months inside the sacred territory. That was the limit.

BAI'T UR-RIDWAN OR THE PLEDGE UNDER THE TREE

MUHAMMAD's anger of Righteousness took possession of him. " We will not leave till we have accomplished our object even if we have to fight these people." He called his men together, stopped under a tree and took their pledge, Muḥammad's hand striking above the hand of the pledgee and each man saying: "I will fight unto death." All took the pledge, filled with faith and resolution to die like one man to avenge the death of 'Othmán. History affords no better example of "All for one and one for all."

Says God, with regard to this pledge:

> Surely God was satisfied with the faithful when they swore allegiance to thee under the tree, then He knew what was in their hearts, therefore he sent down tranquillity upon them and rewarded them with a near victory,
>
> And with large prizes of war which they took; for God is Mighty, Wise. (Qur-án, 48 : 18-19.)

The victory foretold in this verse is the victory of Khaibar which will be related hereafter. When all his followers had finished taking the oath, Muḥammad struck his own right hand on his left (representing 'Othmán) and repeated the formula of the oath as if 'Othmán was present in person.

The swords were now out of their sheaths and war was certain and so was victory or martyrdom. The hearts of the Muslims beat with the joy of being in paradise soon, and the souls soared high in quest of adventure with assured success. And lo! there was 'Othmán returning from the Quraish safe and sound. What happiness! and yet what a disappointment in a double sense. 'Othmán told Muḥammad that the Quraish knew for a certainty that he was visiting Mecca for Ḥajj and not for fight, but there was Khálid bin Walīd with their army in his path and that unless some way was found out of this impasse, there must be war. Once the sanctity of Mecca was transgressed it would become a precedence for all time.

THE PEACE, OR TRUCE, OF HUDAIBIYA: FEBRUARY-MARCH 628 A.C.

THE Quraish now sent a deputation under Sohail bin 'Amr, one of their wisest, most fluent and influential men.

The writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* thus summarises the negotiations :

"It was on this occasion that the famous Homage under the tree took place, when Muḥammad pledged his followers by striking hands that they would stand by him and go to death for his sake. Some of the Koraish agents witnessed the scene, and were immensely impressed by it ; such an enthusiastic obedience as Mohammed received, such an ascendancy over the minds of men as he exercised, they had never before conceived to be possible, and on their return they urged their people in the strongest way not to permit matters to come to extremities. The Koraish accordingly judged it best to offer a bargain with Mohammed, the terms being that for this year he was to withdraw, so that the Arabs might not say that he had forced an entrance, but that in the following year he was to return and be permitted to remain three days within the sacred territory for the purpose of sacrifice. After some discussion Mohammed accepted this proposal ....When the agreement was to be committed to writing, Mohammed dictated the words : 'In the name of Alláh, Ar-Raḥmán,' but the Meccan plenipotentiary, Sohail bin 'Amr, declared that he knew nothing about Ar-Raḥmán, and insisted upon the customary formula, 'In thy name, Alláhhomma !' The Moslems murmured, but Mohammed yielded. He then went on to dictate : 'This is the treaty of peace between the apostle of God.....' Sohail protested anew ; to acknowledge Mohammed as the apostle of God would be to declare himself his follower ; the designation ought

to be simply Mohammed bin 'Abdulláh. The Moslems murmured louder than before, and refused to consent to the change. The heads of the two tribes of Medīna, Osaid bin Ḥoḍair and Sa'd bin 'Obáda, held the hand of the scribe and declared that 'Mohammed the apostle of God' must be written, or the sword must decide. The Meccan representatives whispered to one another words of amazement at the spirit displayed by these men. But Mohammed made a sign to the zealots to hold their peace, and again gave way (Sur. XVII, 110)."

This quotation from a European writer is of value inasmuch as it shows the hold Muḥammad had over the hearts of his men and their obedience to him. In spite of the fact that the concessions were galling to their minds they obeyed Muḥammad and did not press matters to go to war. Their greatest objection to the treaty was the stipulation (mentioned below) that if a Quraishite came without the permission of his guardian (Wáli) to Muḥammad, he must be delivered up; but if on the other hand, one of Muḥammad's people came to the Quraish he would not be delivered up. But Muḥammad's followers yielded to him even on such a personal matter relying on his wisdom and knowledge of the future. Surely no Arab would have consented to such a onesided agreement but Muḥammad knew better, as it will be proved hereafter. The translation of the Treaty (copied from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) is as follows:—

"In thy name, O God! This is the treaty of peace concluded by Mohammed b. 'Abdulláh and Sohail b. 'Amr. They have agreed to allow their arms to rest for ten

years. During this time each party shall be secure, and neither shall injure the other; no secret damage shall be inflicted, but uprightness and honour prevail betwixt us. Whoever wishes to enter into treaty and covenant with Mohammed can do so, and whoever wishes to enter into treaty and covenant with the Koraish can do so. But if a Koraishite comes without permission of his guardian (Wáli) to Mohammed, he shall be delivered up; but if, on the other hand, one of Mohammed's people comes to the Koraish he shall not be delivered up. This year Mohammed with his companions must withdraw from us, but next year he may come amongst us and remain for three days, yet without other weapons than those of a traveller, the swords remaining in their sheaths."

THE TREATY OF HUDAIBIYA AND AFTER

THE reader will note that this is the first time the Quraish have made peace with Muḥammad since they declared to Abu-Ṭálib, about twelve years before, that Muḥammad must stop preaching Islám or else the fight must go on till one of the parties died. They renewed their declaration of war against him time after time; and prevented Muḥammad's entry into Mecca against all rules of Arabian custom, in the sacred month of Dhul-Qa'da. They attacked Muḥammad three times, twice close to Medīna and once at Badr. And even the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* admits that they had perennial feuds with Muḥammad. Under these circumstances, if, Muḥammad took the initiative against them, their allies and intriguers he was absolutely justified by all the

laws of war and morality. The treaty of Ḥudaibiya shows how solicitous he was for peace and how great was his love for his enemies, the Quraish.

As a consequence of this treaty, Banu Bakr, Muḥammad's old and inveterate enemies joined the Quraish. Banu Khuzá' joined Muḥammad.

The ink of the treaty of Ḥudaibiya had hardly dried when Abu-Jandal son of Sohail bin 'Amr (the man who made the agreement with Muḥammad) came and joined the Muslims.

When Sohail saw him, he caught hold of him, beat him and dragged him back. Abu-Jandal cried : "O ye Muslims ! will ye drive me back to the pagans and let them persecute me on account of my faith ?"

The Muslims felt as if their hearts were cut by this appeal, but Muḥammad stood firm for fulfilling his treaty. He said to Abu-Jandal : " O Abu-Jandal ! be patient and control thyself, surely God will make some way out for thee and for the weak (in Mecca). We have bound ourselves to make peace between ourselves and the people (Quraish) and we have given them and they have given us the Covenant of God and we will not break that."

Abu-Jandal was taken back in custody to Mecca.

Muḥammad sacrificed the animals, shaved his head and started on the journey back to Medīna. The Muslims were discussing the treaty of Ḥudaibiya. Some were satisfied and some were not. Midway between Mecca and Medīna God revealed to Muḥammad the Chapter of the Qur-án entitled the Victory (No. 48). Muḥammad was extremely happy, for God told him

distinctly in this Sūra that the treaty of Ḥudaibiya was a victory, and promised him a succession of victories in the future and confirmed everything that he had done and consoled the hearts of the Muslims. The reader should study this Chapter very carefully. The following brief analysis will be of some use:

> Surely We have given thee a decision (or victory) a very clear decision.

This refers to the treaty and calls it a clear decision or a decisive moral victory.

> And God will help thee a powerful helping.

This prophesies the conquest of Mecca when Muḥammad came with an army of 10,000 soldiers and entered Mecca unopposed.

Verses 4 and 5 console the Muslims for their trials in this journey and verse 6 foretells the fate of the pagans and the hypocrites. Verse 10 states that the "Pledge under the Tree" was a pledge with God.

Verses 11 to 15 foretell that when Muḥammad goes on his next conquest those who stayed behind will ask to join him and make excuses for their staying behind but God shows Muḥammad that they are not to be believed. Verse 16 prophesies wars with the Persians and Romans:

> Say thou to those amongst the Beduins who stayed behind: "You will soon be called upon to (meet) a people of great strength, you will have to fight them or they will submit.
>
> If then you obey, God will give you a goodly reward.

"The people of great strength" are the armed forces of the two empires surrounding Arabia. They will be

against the Beduins which clearly shows that the enemy will not be Arabs.

The blind, the lame and the sick are excused from joining the army. Verse 18 has already been quoted and refers to the Pledge under the Tree.

Verse 20 promises large prizes of war in the future as happened at Khaibar a month after.

Verse 21 is worth quoting :

> And (He promises you) another victory over which you have no control at present, but God has encompassed it, for God is Capable of doing all He pleases.

This is the victory of Khaibar. This prophecy is a sign for all right-minded men to realise that Muḥammad was not forging the Qur-án but it was God who was revealing it to him.

Verses 22 and 26 give reasons why God withheld Muslims from fighting near Mecca.

Verses 27 to the end of the chapter prophesy the fulfilment of Muḥammad's dream and entry into the Ka'ba without fear of foe, and further promise great material and spiritual development of the Muslim community and tell the Muslims that they are made of the same stuff as were the faithful before them who believed in Moses and Jesus: "That is their attribute in the Torah and their attribute in the Evangel." In other words, that they are the faithful mentioned in all revealed Books.

THE STORY OF ABU-BASIR

ABOUT this time a young man called Abu-Baṣīr ran away from Mecca to Medīna without the permission of

his master. The Meccans sent a letter to Muḥammad with the guardian of Abu-Baṣīr and another man to bring back Abu Baṣīr according to the treaty. Abu-Baṣīr said what Abu-Jandal had said before and Muḥammad replied in the same way and had Abu-Baṣīr sent back. On the way back, Abu-Baṣīr killed one of his guards and ran back again to Medīna but Muḥammad would have nothing to do with him. Abu-Baṣīr, therefore, ran away to the sea-coast on the way to Syria. When the converts in Mecca, numbering about 70 heard this and knew that they could get no help from Muḥammad and being daily persecuted, they all ran away to Abu-Baṣīr who became their leader.

These men had now an opportunity to assert themselves and they revenged themselves on the Quraish by intercepting and attacking their caravans. The Quraish were forced to beg Muḥammad to cancel the clause which forced him to send back the Quraishite converts to the Quraish. The seventy Muslims returned to Medīna and the Beduins began to join Muḥammad from all sides. Thus the very clause of the treaty which was most objectionable to the Muslims proved most damaging to the Quraish. Muḥammad's companions (especially 'Omar, who had bitterly complained of this clause) who had openly expressed their disapproval thereof, now marvelled at the wisdom and foresight of Muḥammad.

THE TREATY OF HUDAIBIYA A GREAT VICTORY AS FORETOLD BY THE QUR-AN

"If at first it seemed," says the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "as if Mohammed had

shamefully given way, it soon became apparent, nevertheless, that the advantage lay with him. 'No victory of Islam,' Abu-Bakr was wont to say, 'has more importance than the treaty of Ḥudaibiya ; men are always for hurrying things on, but God lets them ripen. Previously there had subsisted a wall of partition between the Moslems and the rest of men; they never spoke to each other; wherever they met, they began to fight. Subsequently hostility died down; security and mutual confidence took its place. Every man of even moderate intelligence who heard of Islam joined it; in the twenty-two months during which the truce subsisted, the number of conversions was greater than throughout the whole of the previous period; the faith diffused itself in all directions among the Arabs.' "

That is what Abu-Bakr says. What does the writer in the *Encyclopædia* himself say? Here it is:

"The treaty of Ḥudaibiya gave a breathing space to the two combatants, and of this the Prophet reaped the whole advantage. The truce which lasted for almost two years, brought to the Meccans an almost unbroken series of humiliations and losses. Contrary to all expectation, the provision made in their favour, by which Mohammed bound himself to send back such of their sons as deserted to him before their majority, turned to their hurt, so that they had to ask Mohammed to have it changed."

THE WOMEN MUHAJIRAT

But the treaty did not say that the women of the Quraish who deserted to Muḥammad were to be sent

back and God sent a most equitable revelation with regard to their case.

> O ye who believe! when believing women come to you having fled their homes then examine them.
> God knows best as to their faith.
> If you then know them to be believing women then return them not to the unbelievers.
> Those women are not lawful to them nor are they to them;
> But give them what they have spent and there is no blame on you if you marry them when you have paid their dues.
> And hold not on to the ties of marriage with unbelieving women and ask back what you have spent and they (unbelieving men) should ask for what they have spent.
> This is the judgment of God.
> He decides between you, for God is Knowing, Wise.
> (Qur-án, 60 : 10.)

There could be no more equitable law than that. Unbelieving women should be sent back to unbelievers and believing women should not. In each case the party who has spent money on their dowry and other expenses is entitled to demand that from the opposite party.

A MUSLIM'S PLEDGE

VERSE 12 of Chapter 60 gives the famous pledge which both men and women took when they became Muslims. In the case of women it runs as follows :—

> O Prophet! when believing women come to thee giving thee a pledge that they will not join aught with God

And that they will not steal
And that they will not commit adultery
And that they will not kill their children
And that they will not bring a calumny forging it before their hands and their feet
And that they will not disobey thee in what is good,
Then take their pledge and ask God to forgive them...
(Qur-án, 60 : 12.)

Muḥammad returned to Medīna after the peace of Ḥudaibiya in the month of Dhul-Ḥijj (12th) of the year 6 A.H. It took him three weeks to return after the completion of the treaty of Ḥudaibiya as he stayed there for some days.

He spent the rest of the year in planning out his future course and when his plans were mature he immediately set to work to accomplish them without the loss of a single day. He had left Medīna on the 1st of Dhul-Qa'da 6 A.H., so that he had barely 15 days' rest at Medīna before starting on his new propaganda.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SEVENTH YEAR OF HEGIRA

10th March 628 to 28th February 629 A.C.

FROM the seventh year of Hegira the recorded facts of Muḥammad's life are so numerous and given in such detail in the traditions that it is absolutely necessary to confine one's attention to the chief currents of his life and to separate the political and historical evolution of Islám from its purely spiritual development.

Muslims had now, through Muḥammad's efforts, learnt to read and and write, and the impetus given to learning by the necessity of preaching the Qur-án was so powerful that a people of ignorant and drunkard Beduins was fast becoming a most highly gifted nation of scholars, preachers, historians, statesmen, administrators and generals.

Muḥammad's wisdom, energy, trust in God and never-failing foresight had germinated in the souls of his followers and made them bigger and mightier than kings, Chosroes and Cæsars. Their souls had been set free from the bondage of customs, superstitions and the slavery of priests. Each man of them prayed direct to God without bowing before any intermediaries, intercessors or minor deities. They knew that, as men, they were possessed of souls which found satisfaction in

nothing but God. God had become their Reality and they were not afraid of any earthly power whatsoever. *La-Ilaha-ill-Allah*, "There is no deity but God" had made them free from the commands of all beings except God. Muḥammad was obeyed not because he was Muḥammad but because he was "The Messenger of God". Muḥammad's commands were not his but God's.

MUHAMMAD STARTS FOR KHAIBAR

It has already been stated in the last chapter that Muḥammad had received the good news that God had encompassed another victory for the Muslims over which the Muslims had as yet no control but which was pre-determined as an extra reward for their trouble in the journey to Ḥudaibiya. Muḥammad knew that this was going to be the victory over the Jews of Khaibar but he kept the name secret.

On the 1st day of Muḥarram (the first month) of 7 A.H. he set out with his followers from Medīna taking only those who had accompanied him to Ḥudaibiya. By forced marches, in three days, he reached Khaibar, the strongest and most fortified settlement of the Jews. It was from Khaibar that Banu Naḍīr had been harassing him and making alliances against him. The Jews were expecting another war with him but not quite so soon. On the 4th or 5th of Muḥarram 7 A.H., about 15th March 628, the Jews had gone out to their fields, as usual, when lo! there was Muḥammad (and his men) on the horizon.

They were surprised, but as they were already in

communication with Banu Ghaṭfán and had a number of invulnerable forts they thought Muḥammad was mad in leaving Medīna and coming to their place. For the first time in his life Muḥammad had a force of one hundred horsemen. The Jews immediately rushed to their forts.

The position was an extremely serious one for Muḥammad. Arabs made wagers on the chances of his success. The Beduins argued like this: If ten thousand men of the Allies could not get entry into Medīna which was not fortified at all except by a wretched trench how could Muḥammad win against the strong forts of the Jews with their huge walls and iron gates? The thing was impossible and Muḥammad had at last put his foot into the serpent's hole and the tables would be turned on him now without the least doubt.

THE JEWS PREPARE TO DIE TO THE LAST MAN: THEIR PLANS

THE Jews also realised that this was their last stand against Muḥammad and that if they lost, they might be treated as Banu Quraiẓah had been. They consulted together and with the advice of their chief Sallám bin Mishkam, they put their property and their families in the forts called Waṭīḥ and Sulálim, their treasures in the fort called Ná'im. Their warriors took shelter in the fort called Naṭát.

The Jews had six strong forts and several fortified quarters. Their purpose, apparently, was to tire out Muḥammad's men in attack on fort after fort. They

thought that if they put everything in one fort and lost it, the war would be over soon. Muḥammad's small force of 1400 or 1500 men could not possibly lay siege to all the forts at once and would be obliged to a prolonged war in which the Muslims must lose.

Muḥammad, on his part, could not possibly go on for a long siege as there was danger of his enemies cutting him off from Medīna. He therefore, ordered an attack on the fort called Al-Naṭát. A fierce battle took place and fifty Muslims were wounded. Sallám bin Mishkam died and his place was taken by either one Ḥárith bin Abī-Zainab or by Kin'ána bin Abī-Ḥoqaiq who made a sortie out of Fort Ná'im. Banu Khazraj pushed back the enemy to the fort and surrounded it most rigorously. The Jews being well protected by their fortifications fought with desperate courage knowing that this was their last stand.

Days passed but the Muslims could not take this fort. The Prophet sent Abu-Bakr as the standard-bearer to conquer this fort. Abu-Bakr fought with all his valour but without success. Next day the Prophet sent 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb as the leader to conquer the fort but 'Omar also could not force an entry. The third day the Prophet appointed 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib as the leader and standard-bearer of Islám and said to him: "Take this standard and go on with it till God gives thee victory".

When 'Alī reached the fort, the besieged came out and fought a severe battle. One of the Jews attacked 'Alī so severely that 'Alī's shield was broken

in the fight. 'Alī threw down his shield, pulled out one of the iron doors of the fort and made it act as a shield and fought till he won. 'Alī then used this door as a bridge over the fortifications for the passage of the Muslims. Ḥárith, the chief of the Jews, fell and the Muslims took the fort by assault. But there were four more forts to be taken before the Muslims could claim victory, and their provisions ran short till they had to kill their horses and eat their flesh.

Time was pressing. The Jews now removed themselves to a new fort called Qamūṣ. The Muslims took that also, but they were in great straits as to provisions because none of the forts taken had any provisions in them.

The Jews now removed their forces to still another fort called Al-Ṣa'b. The Muslims laid siege to this also. The Jews fought more desperately than ever, not yielding an inch of ground and willingly courting death so that they might kill as many Muslims as possible. But they could not fight against the spirit of God with the help of which the Muslims were fighting them. This fort also fell and the Muslims found plenty of provisions therein.

Marḥab, a leader of the Jews, came out reciting poems, boasting of his courage and the strength of Khaibar. Muḥammad called out to his men: "Who will be for this man?" Muḥammad bin Maslama came forward and fought him with the permission of the Prophet. Marḥab made a deadly thrust of his sword at bin Maslama and it appeared as if bin Maslama must die, but he saved himself by receiving the blow on his shield and killed

Marḥab. And in this way the war went on with the greatest severity, the attackers and defenders both fighting most heroically.

The Jews now entrenched themselves in a fort callad Al-Zubair and the fight went on with relentless fury till nothing was left to the Jews except Waṭīḥ and Sallám in which were their children and wealth.

The Jews knew that the end must come. They asked Muḥammad for peace on the following terms, *viz.*, that their lives, property and women and children should not be touched, but that they would pay him half the produce of their lands and be Muḥammad's subjects. Muḥammad accepted their terms, and so the Jews were free but they could no longer be the enemies of Muḥammad. They had had their lesson. How wise Muḥammad was in retaining the Jews as his tenants is shown by the fact that if he had killed them, or banished them, he would have had no men available to cultivate their lands and his victory would have brought him no fruits? But, as it was, the Jews were thankful to him for sparing their lives and he had provisions to feed the Muhájirīn and the poor at Medīna. Every year 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa came to Khaibar and divided the produce. Muḥammad kept whatever booty had been taken in the conquered forts of Al-Naṭát and Al-Shaqq but returned copies of the Torah to the Jews.

Whilst he was still at Khaibar and negotiations for peace were going on, Muḥammad sent an expedition to Fidak and the people there made peace on the same terms as the Jews at Khaibar. As no fighting took place,

half the produce of Fidak was reserved for the special disposal of the Prophet.

From Khaibar Muḥammad went to Wádi ul-Qurá. The Jews there fought him but were defeated and had to submit on the same terms as the others.

The Jews of Taimá' accepted peace without fighting.

In this way, in a few weeks Muḥammad had subjugated the whole of North Arabia and the enmity and tension between the Muslims and Jews was removed just as it had been removed in the South by the peace of Ḥudaibiya.

MUHAMMAD IS POISONED AT KHAIBAR

THE Jews are a people whose ways are queer. They made peace with Muḥammad but still they wanted to kill him.

Zainab bint Ḥárith, wife of Sallám bin Mishkam, invited Muḥammad to a feast and prepared a roasted sheep for him. Muḥammad and his companions sat down to the feast. Muḥammad took a morsel of meat, chewed it and threw it out saying: "These bones inform me that they have been poisoned." Bishar bin Brá' who was with him and who had swallowed a little meat died on the spot.

Now, though the idea of poisoning may have originated with Zainab, the poison must have been obtained and put into the cooking of the meat with the knowledge of the men. Zainab was questioned and she admitted her guilt. Some say she was executed for the murder of Brá' and some say she was forgiven on account of the

state of her feelings after the death of her husband and her father in the war. But this poisoning has left a deep impression on the minds of Muslims against the treacherous nature of the Jews. The writer in the *Encyclopœdia Britannica* approves of this poisoning of Muḥammad.

Amongst the prizes of the war of Khaibar was Ṣaffīyya, daughter of Huyyai Ibn-Akhṭab of Banu Naḍīr and wife of Kin'ána bin Rabī' who had the hoards of Banu Naḍīr with him. The Prophet asked him about these. He swore that he did dot know where they were. The Prophet said: "If we find them with thee we will kill thee." He said: "All right." But the miser's heart betrayed him. He began roaming about parts of the debris where the hoards were buried seeing that no one took them out. News was brought to Muḥammad and on the place being dug, the treasure was found there and Kin'ána paid the penalty of his lies. Ṣaffīyya his wife fell to the lot of one of Muḥammad's companions but she would not consent to remain with him and wanted to be taken over by the Prophet. He redeemed her, set her free and married her.

MUHAMMAD'S PROPAGATION OF ISLAM—A CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD

Drinking Forbidden

By this time the ordinances as to prayers, fasting, alms-giving and Ḥajj had been revealed. Gambling and drinking had been forbidden. God knew that drinking

could not be given up by the Arabs in a day, so He at first pointed out to them that though there was pleasure or profit in drinking and gambling there was also a great sin or loss in their indulgence. He then forbade Muslims to come to prayers whilst intoxicated or semi-intoxicated, a state in which they could not understand what they were saying in their prayers. From this one may deduce the fact that God wants us to know what we are saying in our prayers and what we are praying for, otherwise the prayer loses its efficacy.

This injunction against praying whilst drunk was extremely effective and most Muslims voluntarily gave up drinking as they did not want to be absent from prayers.

Finally, God made drinking and gambling altogether unlawful for Muslims under any circumstances and this saved them from waste of wealth and unnecessary quarrels and fights arising out of these two habits. But what was past was forgiven and Muslims were assured that those who had been firm in faith had God's reward for their faith and for their deeds done in the path of God.

MUHAMMAD SENDS LETTERS TO RULERS INVITING THEM TO ISLAM 7 A. H.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with his preparations for the conquest of Khaibar, Muḥammad prepared embassies to the rulers of the world known to him inviting them to Islám. He sent messengers as far as India and China but a description of the best known embassies only will be given in this book.

The two empires which concerned Arabia most were the Empires of Byzantium under Heracleus and of Irán under Kesra. These empires had been fighting each other. The Persians having been conquerors at first and then the Christians. Yemen and Iráq were under the influence of the Persians whilst Egypt and Syria were under the Eastern Roman Empire and Arabia was surrounded by them. But the rulers of Ghassán, Yemen, Egypt and Abyssinia were more or less independent.

Muḥammad determined to invite them to Islám. He was not afraid of the consequences. Worldly wisdom would have dictated that he should first consolidate his position in Arabia and then set forth on ventures abroad, but Muḥammad was a Messenger of God and not merely an earthly ruler. It was God's work and must be done.

He sent for his companions and said:

"O ye men! God has sent me as a blessing to all mankind, therefore, differ not as differed the disciples of Jesus, son of Mary."

"And how did they differ?" asked his companions.

He replied: "Jesus called them to what I am calling you, but he whom he sent on a near journey obeyed and accepted his mission and he who was to be sent far away showed reluctance and heaviness of heart."

And then he told them that he was going to send messengers to:

(1) Heracleus of Byzantium

(2) Kesra of Irán

(3) Maquqas of Egypt

(4) Ḥárith of Ghassán, King of Ḥira
(5) Ḥárith King of Yemen
(6) The Negus of Abyssinia and others.

Letter to Heracleus and its Reception

MUHAMMAD'S companions obeyed. Muḥammad made a ring of silver and engraved it with the words Muḥammad Rasūlu-Ulláh "Muḥammad, Messenger of God." The letters were sealed with this ring. The wording of some of the letters was similar. A translation of the one sent to Heracleus would do for example!

"With the Name of God (Alláh), the most Merciful and Compassionate (Arraḥmán, Arraḥīm). From Muḥammad bin 'Abdullah to Heracleus, the Chief of Rome (meaning Roman Empire). Peace be with (or on) him who follows the guidance. After that, I invite you to the call of Islám. (If) you submit (or be at peace) you will enjoy safety (*i.e.* Islám) (and) God will grant you a double recompense. But if you turn your back, the sin of your subjects will be on you.

"O ye people of the Book!
Come to a saying,
The same for us and for you:—
That we serve none but God,
And that we join naught with Him
And that some of us take not
others as lords besides God.
But if they turn back, then say
'Bear ye witness that we are Muslims'."

This letter was given to Diḥya bin Kalbi.

Heracleus was at this time in Palestine celebrating the victory of the Holy Land over the Persians as foretold in the Qur-án (Chapter, Romans No. 30 : 1-7). Diḥya Kalbi took the letter addressed to Heracleus to the latter's governor, Ḥárith Ghassáni, at Busra. Ḥárith sent on the letter to his master. When Heracleus got Muḥammad's message, he sent for some Arabs to interpret the same. Curiously enough, Muḥammad's relentless foe Abu-Sufyán (who was still a disbeliever) was there on a commercial venture. He was sent for at the Court. Heracleus held a full court with all the patriarchs, priests and clergy attending on him together with the chief Arabs in his territory. Heracleus said to the Arabs :

"Which of you is related to this claimant of prophethood ?"

Abu-Sufyán : "I am."

Heracleus : "What kind of family does the claimant belong to ?"

Abu-Sufyán : "Noble."

Heracleus : "Has anyone else claimed prophethood in this family ?"

Abu-Sufyán : "No."

Heracleus : "Has there been a king in this family ?"

Abu-Sufyán : "No."

Heracleus : "Are the people who have accepted this religion weak or strong (meaning poor or rich) ?"

Abu-Sufyán : "They are poor" (*lit.* weak).

Heracleus : "Are his followers on the increase or decrease ?"

Abu-Sufyán : "Increasing."

Heracleus: " Have you ever known him to tell lies? "

Abu-Sufyán: " No."

Heracleus : " Does he ever go against his covenants?"

Abu-Sufyán: " Not so far but we have to see whether he carries out the new agreement made between us and him."

Heracleus: " Have you ever fought him in war ? "

Abu-Sufyán: " Yes."

Heracleus: " What has been the result ? "

Abu-Sufyán: " Sometimes we have won and sometimes he."

Heracleus: " What does he teach ? "

Abu-Sufyán: " Worship one God, join no partners with Him, carry out your prayers, be chaste, speak the truth and keep union amongst uterine relations."

Heracleus then addressed the Arabs through an interpreter and said :

" You say he is of noble birth. Prophets are always of noble birth. You say none of his family has claimed prophethood before. If it had been so, I would have thought that he was doing so now under the influence of heredity. You admit that there has been no king in his family, if it had been so, I would have thought that he was after kingship. You acknowledge that he does not lie. He whc does not lie to men, how can he lie to God? You witness that poor people follow him. It is always the poor who follow the prophets before others. You say his followers are increasing. A true faith always does that. You state that he does not break his covenants. Prophets never deceive. You profess that he preaches

prayers, piety and chastity. If all this be true, I am sure his kingdom will reach the place I tread. I was certain that a prophet was coming but I did not think that he would be born in Arabia. If I were to go there I would wash his feet."

The letter was then read and interpreted. There was a tremendous sensation in the court on this pronouncement of Heracleus and an uproar started against him. Heracleus dismissed the court and had the courtiers pacified by some political excuses for what he had said. Muḥammad had succeeded in his mission. The Word of God had been carried to the ears of all concerned from Cæsar on the throne to the footman on the road.

Muhammad's Letter to Kesra Pervez of Persia

THE second letter was to Kesra Pervez of Persia and given to 'Abdullah bin Hadhafa. It ran as follows :—

" With the Name of God (Alláh), Arraḥmán, Arraḥīm. From Muḥammad, Messenger of God to Kesra the Chief of Persia. Peace be upon him who follows the guidance and believes in God and His Messenger. And I bear witness that there is no deity but God (Alláh). I bear witness that I am the Messenger of God to all men that I may warn him who is alive (spiritually). Become a Muslim (and) you will be at peace. But if you refuse then the sin of the Magians be on you."

Kesra was not accustomed to be addressed in such a curt manner. He was used to Oriental pomp and ceremonies. He considered Muḥammad's letter as an insult to his august person. He became hot with

anger and said: "Being a slave of mine, he dare address me thus," and tore the letter into pieces. When the Prophet heard that, he said: "God will tear his kingdom into pieces."

Kesra Pervez sent messengers to Bádhán, Governor of Yemen, asking him to send men to Hejaz to capture Muḥammad and bring him to Persia. Bádhán sent men to Muḥammad asking him to obey the Emperor of Persia on pain of his being overrun by Persian armies. The Prophet said: "Go and tell him that the kingdom of Islám will soon reach his capital." The messengers returned to Yemen and received news of the death of Kesra.

Muḥammad's Letter to the Negus and his Acceptance

WHEN were the letters sent to the various rulers? Historians differ. Some say they were sent before the Battle of Khaibar and some say after that. It may be that they were written in 6 A.H. but were not all despatched immediately. The messengers would have to wait for caravans and ships and travelling was not so easy then as it is now.

'Amr bin Ommaya Ḍamri was the messenger sent to the Negus. The writer of this book has seen a photograph of this letter published many years ago and as far as he can remember it is with the exception of the names almost the same as the letter to Heracleus.

Ja'far bin Abu-Ṭálib is said to have been still in Abyssinia when Muḥammad's letter reached the Negus who, it is said, accepted Islám at the hands of Ja'far.

Amongst the emigrants in Abyssinia was Umm-Ḥabība, daughter of Abu-Sufyán whose Muslim husband had died. Muḥammad married her by proxy in order to cement his relations with the Quraish especially with Abu-Sufyán.

REPLY FROM MAQUQAS

THE letter written to the Ruler of Egypt, Maquqas, was given to Háṭib bin Abi-Balta'. Maquqas replied in Arabic. The following is a translation of his letter:

"To Muḥammad bin 'Abdullah from Maquqas, Chief of Qibṭ (Egypt). Peace be upon you. After that, I have read your letter and understood what you have mentioned therein and what you call (us) to. And I knew that a prophet was going to appear but I thought he would appear in Syria. I have honoured your messenger and I am sending you two young ladies (*Lit.* girls) who are held in great respect in Egypt together with some garments for you. I am also sending a mare (or mule) for you to ride and peace be with you."

One of these young ladies was Mária whom Muḥammad took into his *Ḥaram* and the other named Sereen was given to the poet Ḥassán. The mare was named Duldul and the Prophet rode it in the Battle of Ḥunain.

REPLIES FROM OTHER CHIEFS

HOWDHA BIN 'ALI, Chief of Yamama, replied: "What you say is all very nice and if there is a share for me in your kingdom I am ready to follow." Muḥammad sent him an answer in the negative.

Ḥárith Ghassáni, Governor of Syria, under the Roman Empire, was extremely angry at reading Muḥammad's letter and ordered his armies to attack Muḥammad and the Muslims were waiting his onslaught every day.

The reply of the Chief of Yemen was very favourable and but for Mecca lying in between him and Medīna, he would have joined his forces with those of Muḥammad. Thus, one of the subject provinces of the Persian Empire had already been taken away from Persia immediately after Kesra's tearing of Muḥammad's letter.

THE RETURN OF THE EMIGRANTS FROM ABYSSINIA

MUHAMMAD returned from Khaibar to Medīna as did the emigrants from Abyssinia with some of his messengers. Muḥammad embraced them all and was especially happy to meet Ja'far. And he used to say, "I don't know which is the greater happiness—the victory of Khaibar or the meeting of Ja'far."

Muḥammad and his companions were once in their lives free from all immediate danger. The Peace of Ḥudaibiya had made them safe from the Quraish in the South and the subjection of the Jews had given them peace in the North. But a danger far greater than that of the Jews or the Quraish was waiting them across the border against which all the Beduins must be prepared. God had already informed Muhammad:

> You will soon be called upon to meet a people of great strength, you will have to fight them or they will submit,

If then you obey, God will give you a goodly reward.
(Qur-án, 48 : 16.)

That was a reference to the armed forces of the Eastern Roman Empire, and the verse being addressed to Beduins it implies that this war will have to be fought by them and will continue when Muḥammad was no longer in their midst and by Beduins who were as yet reluctant to fight for Muḥammad.

But for the present, Muḥammad could devote all his energies to the reformation of the Arabs. And never did any ruler or prophet rise to greater spiritual culture in his own person or in the persons of his followers. Mosques were being built at Medīna and other places, religious teachers were being instructed by Muḥammad in person who taught them the Qur-ān and the Wisdom and who purified their souls so that with the help of the Word of God and His Spirit they were becoming as learned and as pious as the prophets of Israel. "The learned men of my followers are like the prophets of the Israelites" says Muḥammad, and the saying was proving true. Medīna became the centre of Light and Learning where God communicated with Muḥammad and Muḥammad communicated with his followers as to the beauties of Faith, the Attributes of God and the great unknown regions of life beyond the grave. The souls of Muslims when they remember God are freed from all earthly burdens and soar into the realm of the Almighty untrammelled by considerations of earthly gain or personal vanity. God liberates the soul of the poius Muslim from fear and greed.

The liberated soul seeks nothing but the will of God in which it moves satisfied and happy. That was the case with Muḥammad and his companions in this Happy Seventh Year of the Hegira, and they were preparing themselves to visit the House at the end of this year as agreed with the Quraish. There, they would make the circuit of the House and pray in the Station where Abraham had stood building the House nearly 2500 years before and Ishmael his first-born with him. Man lives not on bread and butter but on the memory of holy deeds done by himself and his predecessors. Those in whom the soul of goodness is dead are in their graves whilst still treading this earth. The only life worth living is the life in and with God. And Muḥammad always lived in and with God. Every word that fell from his lips was a pearl of beauty; every thought that he thought was the fountainhead of righteousness and every deed that he did was goodness personified. No wonder that each of his followers was ready to sacrifice himself for his sake a thousand times if he had a thousand lives. That was the secret of his success and the magnetism which drew men towards him. He had no pride and no aloofness from the meanest and the poorest of his followers. On the other hand, the only thing of which he was proud was his poverty. Let kings, rulers, governors, magistrates, chiefs, administrators and people in charge of the affairs of mankind learn their lesson of humility, nobility and service from Muḥammad. If they do so, the world will be happy before the day is 12 hours old.

MUHAMMAD'S SUNNAT OR RULES OF LIFE

'ALI BIN ABU-ṬALIB once asked the Prophet as to what was his Sunnat. This is what Muḥammad said:

Knowledge of God is my Capital;
Reason is the root of my Faith;
Love is my Foundation;
Enthusiasm is my Horse;
Remembrance of God is my Friend;
Firmness is my Treasure;
Sorrow is my Companion;
Science is my Weapon;
Patience is my Mantle;
Contentment is my Booty;
Poverty is my Pride;
Devotion is my Art;
Conviction is my Power;
Truth is my Redeemer;
Obedience is my Sufficiency;
Struggle is my Manner; and
My Pleasure is in my Prayer.

He was practising these principles, and his followers by carrying out the aforesaid precepts had attained those moral heights which even to-day are an inspiration to students of history. Each man worked like ten or a hundred. A miracle was being performed on this earth. The very dirtiest dregs of human society, namely, the profligate Arabs were being changed into the purest human gold. There have been conquerors, reformers, poets and learned men in the world by the thousand, but no one has ever succeeded in changing men's spirits as

did Muḥammad. And the firth of this Culture was Mecca and towards Mecca were the eyes and hearts of the Muslims.

MUHAMMAD SETS FORTH TO MECCA ON PILGRIMAGE

AT LAST, the sacred month came once again and Muḥammad with 2000 of his devout companions set forth towards the House of God. For full seven years the sight of Mecca had been denied to him. Now, he had a chance. He and his companions carried no arms except the traveller's sword in a sheath.

The Joy and Enthusiasm of Muslims

AMONGST his companions were the Muhájirīn and the returned Emigrants from Abyssinia. How they longed to see their beloved homes and their women-folk and children whom the Quraish had kept back by force? What happiness would it be to meet them face to face and say "Peace be with you, Peace be with you?"

Amongst them were the Anṣár who would like to visit Muḥammad's birth-place and the house where he lived so happily with Khadijah and also Mount Ḥirá' where Gabriel in all his glory had first appeared to him, and the Pass where he had lived 30 odd months in confinement with Banu Háshim. To them, his 53 years of life at Mecca were already the most wonderful part of the history of the world. They would now witness the sacred territory where that history had been made. Going to Mecca for them was like going to Paradise.

Muḥammad's Precautions

AND in these anticipations of joy of heart and happiness of soul they approached Mecca. But what if the Meccans again stopped them, or worst still, if they ambushed them? The Jews had taught treachery to the Quraish. Muḥammad was taking no risks as he was unarmed. He sent 100 horsemen under Muḥammad bin Maslama as scouts but they were not to cross the sacred boundaries of Mecca. When everything was found clear, they descended towards Marrazzahrán, a valley near Mecca. The Muslims urged on their mounts with Muḥammad at their head on his camel named Qaṣwá', and with 60 unladen camels, and wearing garlands round their necks as sacrificial tokens.

The Joy Complete

THEY reached Mecca and dismounted a little away from it. The Muhájirīn began to tell the Anṣár stories of their past life in Mecca; where they were born; how they lived and fought; how they used to drink wine and mix with parties of drunkards and how changed they were now. And all this miracle had been performed by one man—Muḥammad—God's infinite blessings and prayers be on him for ever.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE—THE QURAISH DESERT MECCA

BUT if the Muslims were happy, the Quraish were never so unhappy as they were to-day. They had gone to Medīna

and been repulsed. Their hated-enemy, Muḥammad, would to-day enter their city at the head of 2000 devout followers without striking a single blow; and all this was due to their own signature in the treaty of Ḥudaibiya. There was no more hateful sight in their eyes than this peaceful army of the Muslims. Cursing themselves and cursing their fate they deserted their dwellings lest Muḥammad the enchanter might enchant their women and children into Islám. They climbed Mount Qubais, Mount Ḥirá', and other hills round Mecca counting every second of time till they should come back. Muḥammad had only three days' permit under the treaty.

THE SIGHT OF SIGHTS—MUSLIMS ROUND THE KA'BA

THE Muslims now descended on Mecca from the North. 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa caught hold of the reins of Qaṣwá' and the rest of the Muslims followed on foot. The picture was worth being painted in colour and sung in song. But nobody could sing it as the hearts of the Muslims could do in simple words.

And lo! Ka'ba was in their view and they were in view of the Ka'ba. God and His Angels were witnessing the scene. Suddenly, the shout of "*Labbaik, Labbaik, Alláhumma Labbaik, Lá Sharīka laka Labbaik*": "I am here at thy service, I am here, O God! I am here, There is no Partner with Thee, I am here at Thy service" burst from 2000 throats like so many gunshots and rent the air with its force. The Meccans heard it, and, in spite of themselves, were impressed by it. And

the Muslims?—they were in the seventh heaven. This was their day-light Mi'ráj. Their souls soared high and met the Universal Soul above them. Muḥammad's dream was being realized and they were part of his dream:

> Surely God has in truth made good to His Messenger the vision:
> ' Surely you will enter the holy mosque if it please God, in safety,
> You will shave and cut your hair without any fear'.
>
> (Qur-án, 48 : 27.)

The Faith of God had triumped over all other faiths, and God was a witness. Surely, it was God who had sent Muḥammad with the True Faith. There could be no doubt about it, however displeased the unbelievers might be. The shouts of "Labbaik, Labbaik" pierced the ears of the people and gladdened the hearts of the Muslims.

By this time the Faithful were inside the Mosque and the Meccans looking on from all the heights. If the Meccans had remained in their houses they could not have witnessed this scene. Thus, the very thing they avoided to see they were forced to witness. The Muslims and Muḥammad were in *Iḥrám.*

Muḥammad then kissed the eastern corner of the Ka'ba and ran till he reached the south-eastern corner known as Rukun Yamáni and the two thousand Muslims ran with him round the Ka'ba. Then they walked between the two corners just mentioned, completing one circuit. This was repeated twice making three complete circuits.

The Quraish looked on this scene from the heights of mount Qubais. The zeal and spiritual elation of the faithful rose to such heights that they did not mind even if the Quraish came down upon them. But Muḥammad comforted them and asked them to say:

> There is no deity but God, God alone,
> Who gave victory to His servant,
> And Who alone repulsed the "Confederates."

'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa shouted this at the top of his voice and two thousand Muslims followed in a chorus and the walls of the hills echoed back the shout; and fear entered the hearts of the Quraish.

When the circuit of the Ka'ba was completed, Muḥammad and his companions ran seven times between the hills of Ṣafá and Marwa. Muḥammad was mounted. Then he made the sacrifices near Marwa and shaved his head and the 'Umra was complete.

THE SECOND DAY OF MUHAMMAD'S PILGRIMAGE

THE Muslims were exhausted with fatigue and rested a while. The next day, the Prophet came early to the mosque and remained there till noon-prayers when Bilál climbed the roof of the Ka'ba and called the faithful to prayers.

Two thousand Muslims prayed with the Prophet. For seven years he had not prayed there. The Quraish looked on from their positions perched on the hills and wondered at these prayers. What sort of men were these Muslims? They did not drink wine. They did not gamble. They had no singing girls and no intermingling

of the sexes in shameful pleasures. Their only song was "God is Great, God is Great, There is no deity but Alláh". Surely, there were scores of so-called deities still enshrined in the Ka'ba. Were they asleep? Could not they revenge themselves on Muḥammad who was denying their existence? Or were they utterly powerless? The foundations of unbelief were shaken to their depths. This 'Umra or shorter Pilgrimage was going to be the greatest propaganda for Faith.

MUHAMMAD TRIES TO OUTWIT THE QURAISH

UMM UL-FADAL, wife of 'Abbás bin 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, had a sister named Umm-Maimunah 26 years old who became Muslim when she saw with what fervour the Muslims prayed to God. 'Abbás asked the Prophet to take her as his wife and the Prophet consented and prepared a big feast for the Quraish. This Maimunah was an aunt of Khálid bin Walīd.

Suhail bin 'Amr and Ḥwaiṭab bin 'Abd ul 'Uzá, two of the unbelieving Arab chiefs, came to Muḥammad and said:

"Thy three days are over, get thee out of our place."

The Prophet spoke to them politely and asked their permission to finish the feast and invited them to it but they would have nothing of it. "We are not in need of thy meals, get thee out of this place."

There was nothing left for Muḥammad but to leave Mecca. Maimunah followed him to Medīna.

Muḥammad reached Medīna quite safe and was very happy that his dream had been realized and sure

of the fact that he had left a lasting impression on the minds of the Quraish.

CONVERSION OF KHALID BIN WALID, ʻAMR BIN ʻAS AND OTHERS

AND time justified Muḥammad's conviction about the Quraish. Soon after Muḥammad's departure, Khálid bin Walīd, the general of the Quraish cavalry and the hero of their war at Oḥod stood up in their assembly and said:

"It has been made clear to every man possessed of reason that Muḥammad is neither a poet nor a sorcerer and that what he says is the saying of the Lord of the Worlds. It is the duty of every man of wisdom to follow him."

ʻIkrama, his former comrade in war against Muḥammad, was moved with fear and said:

"You have become a child, O Khálid!"

Khálid: "I have not become a child but I have become a Muslim."

ʻIkrama: "By God, thou shouldst be the last person amongst the Quraish to say that."

Khálid: "Why?"

ʻIkrama: "Because, Muḥammad did injury to thy father when he was wounded, and he killed thy uncle, and the son of thy uncle at Badr. Therefore by God, I would not become a Muslim nor would I say what thou sayest. The Quraish will have nothing to do with him but his killing."

Khálid: "All this is an affair of ignorance and

the puffing up of ignorance. But by God I have become a Muslim because the Truth has been made clear to me."

And Khálid sent his horsemen and his acknowledgment of faith to Muḥammad.

When Abu-Sufyán heard of Khalid's conversion he sent for him and said: "Is it true what I have heard?"

"Yes," said Khálid.

Abu Sufyán's anger got the better of him and he said: "By Al-Lát and Al-'Uzza, if what Muḥammad says were the truth I would have believed in him before thee."

Said Khalid: "Truth is truth, say what you like" and Abu-Sufyán was going to attack him in his anger when 'Ikrama intervened and said: "Will you kill Khálid for his opinion while all the Quraish are of the same opinion as he? By God, I am afraid, if you do that, all the Quraish will migrate to Medīna."

Khálid finding himself unwelcome at Mecca went to Medīna and joined the Muslims.

'Amr bin 'Áṣ and 'Othmán bin Ṭalḥa (care-taker of the Ka'ba) and many others followed Khálid in faith.

And so ended the 7th Year of Hegira in glory for the Faith and great happiness for the faithful. The tree of Islám was now firmly rooted and it was a matter of time only when it would raise its head and overshadow all other faiths. But it still required careful looking after and being watered with the holy water of the Love of God and the Brotherhood of mankind.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE EIGHTH YEAR OF HEGIRA

27th February 629 to 16th February 630 A.C.

MUHAMMAD was busy in the eighth year of Hegira in sending missionaries over the whole Peninsula of Arabia, inviting people to Islám. The rulers and chiefs had been invited but that was not enough. The people themselves must hear the Word of God.

Some of these missionaries were well-treated and came home safe, others were set upon by the enemies of God and killed. This was an unavoidable part of Muḥammad's mission. He who takes no risks never gains any victory. And the risks taken in the propagation of Faith are invariably heavy. The history of European and American missions and missionaries during the 19th and 20th centuries is a case in point. The writer of this book was living in China from 1897 to the end of 1899 when the Germans established themselves in the Province of Shantung simply because three missionaries had been killed. And volumes may be written about the murders of Christian missionaries and the consequences thereof. For every Christian missionary killed "the natives" of Asia and Africa have paid the price in hundreds of men killed and thousands of acres taken away from them. And the money indemnity has always been one of a most imposing figures. The Muslim

missionaries were, however, sent for the sake of God and not for earthly gain.

THE MISSION TO ZAT UT-TALA'

MUHAMMAD sent one mission of 15 men towards the frontiers of Syria to a place called Zat Uṭ-ṭala' to call people to Islám. The missionaries were put to death except their leader who escaped. Muḥammad also sent a messenger to the governor of Busra who was under Heracleus. A man of Ghassán killed this messenger in the name of Heracleus.

Ḥárith, Governor of Ghassán, had already threatened Muḥammad with invasion when Muḥammad had invited him to Islám. In fact, the greatest risk that a man could ever take was the sending of invitations to rulers of neighbouring provinces and empires to embrace Islám. This was inviting attack. But that was God's affair. God had said to Muḥammad:

> Say: "O ye mankind! surely I am the messenger of God towards you all."
> He (is God) to whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth,
> There is no deity but He... (Qur-án, 7 : 158.)

And again:

> O thou messenger!
> Communicate that which has been sent down to thee from thy Lord,
> And if thou dost not (do it),
> Thou hast not delivered His message (at all)...
> (Qur-án, 5 : 67.)

Muḥammad, therefore, if he wanted to carry out his duty, had no option in the matter. His life and the lives of his followers belonged to God entirely and they lived to make sacrifices and not to count the risks. They were God's Lambs, and He could take their souls unto himself whenever He pleased. That was the aim and object of their lives.

THE EXPEDITION OF MUTA

3000 Heroes of Islam against 100000 to 150000 soldiers of the Eastern Roman Empire

In Jamadi-ul-Awwal 8 A.H. (corresponding to July 629 A.C.), Muḥammad prepared an expedition of 3000 Muslims under Zaid bin Ḥárith to go north and to prove to the Romans that he was not afraid of them. As usual, he kept things secret, but most fortunately, or most unfortunately, for the Muslims, the spies of the enemy were present in Medīna and the news of this expedition reached the Romans long before the expedition itself.

Muḥammad had some inward warning as to what was going to happen to the Muslims in this expedition, so he told them that in case Zaid bin Hárith (who was the leader and standard-bearer of the Muslims) was killed, the command was to devolve upon Ja'far bin Abu-Ṭálib and in case he also was killed, 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa was to take his place.

Khálid bin Walīd, the new convert to Islám, also accompanied this expedition. And Muḥammad walked on foot with the expedition till it was outside the city

limits of Medīna. He ordered his men not to kill any Women, Children, or Non-combatants; not to cut down any trees, nor to pull down any buildings.

So that women, children, non-combatants, trees and buildings were immune from the ravages of war. One has only to compare these orders with the aerial bombardment by Italians of Red Cross and Red Crescent missions and the murder of non-combatants being carried on by Italy in Abyssinia whilst these lines are being written (February 1936) to see how humane Muḥammad was compared with modern leaders of mankind. Muḥammad also commanded them, as he always did, not to take the offensive in the fight and also to make a peaceful overture of embracing the true faith of Islam before the commencement of fight. This was Muḥammad's invariable rule. The first attack, or arrow must come from the enemy. The Muslims prayed for the victory of the faithful.

The army moved on till they reached Mu'án in Syria not knowing what they were going to meet.

Shura Ḥabīl, the Governor of Heracleus, having received the news of Muḥammad's expedition gathered together all the tribes under him and the army of Heracleus under his brother or under his own command had joined the Governor's forces till they numbered 100000 to 200000 men.

The Muslims stopped at Mu'án for two nights considering what they should do. The most sensible thing, according to all usage, would have been for the Muslims not to risk themselves against such odds when

destruction was sure to overtake them. They were not up against barbarous Beduins but against warriors and armies accustomed to big fighting. Someone very rightly suggested that Muḥammad should be written to and informed of the numbers of the enemy and that they should wait his instructions. And this opinion would have prevailed but for the eloquence of 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa who was a great poet and a man of spirit. He said:

"O my people! the thing you dislike is the thing you set out for, *viz.*, *Martyrdom*, and we are not fighting the enemy with our numbers, force or material superiority. We are fighting them with nothing but our Faith with which God has honoured us. Let us go on. We are in for either of two good things—Victory or Martyrdom." This eloquent speech conquered the peoples' hearts and put power into their souls and they said:

"Ibn-Rawáḥa has spoken the truth, go forward."

God's Lambs were ready for the sacrifice and God made them His Lions.

They went on to what seemed to be certain death till they reached Balqá' and found the armies of Heracleus gathered at a town called Masháraf. When the Muslims came to close quarters with the enemy, they crossed over to Mūta a better place than Masháraf. And here took place a most sanguinary fight between 3000 Muslims against 100,000 to 200,000 Romans (or Greeks as they are commonly called).

DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE OF MUTA—FIRST DAY

On a hot summer day, with the sun shining fiercely over

their heads and the certainty of paradise in their hearts, the Muslims advanced to the field of battle 3000 against at least 100,000.

Zaid bin Ḥárith, the general, led the attack. There was no stopping him or his companions. He was hit by arrows at close range not once, twice or three times but till his body became a trunk from which grew arrows and he breathed his last—*Lá-iláh ill-Alláh.*

Ja'far, according to the instructions of the Holy Prophet, took the standard from the hands of Zaid. He was only 33 years old and next only to 'Alī, his younger brother, in courage, skill and bravery. He was surrounded on all sides by the enemy forces. He got down from his horse, cut its legs and with his sword fell on the enemy. When he fell down there were 93 wounds on the front part of his body. Whilst Ja'far was fighting his right arm was cut off. He held the standard in his left and when that also was cut off he held it between the two stumps of his arms and he did not fall till his body was cut into two.

Then 'Abdullah bin Rawáḥa took up the standard and fought and then turned back. But his conscience pricked him. He was on horseback. He got down and said to himself: "O my soul! I see thou art not quite pleased with paradise, I will put thee down." He turned back to the enemy and fought like his predecessor till he died.

All the three generals designated by Muḥammad had now fallen in battle and yet the fight went on. Any other army in the world would have turned its back on

the enemy but not the Faithful.

Thábit bin Arqam, a man of Banu Ajlán, took up the standard of Islám and said:

"Ye Muslims! consult together in choosing a man from amongst you."

They replied: "Thyself".

He said: "No, I am not worthy of it".

The people agreed upon Khálid bin Walīd. Khálid took hold of the standard and at once realized the extreme peril of the Muslim forces. He was a man, as later history will prove, beyond a rival in the art of war and in courage and skill. There were many equally brave but none better than he in understanding war and its chances. He ordered a realignment of the Muslim forces till they were all together and fought the enemy with greater advantage than under any of his predecessors. Eight swords were broken in his hands before the evening fell and the enemy had to postpone the fight till the next day.

THE SECOND DAY OF THE BATTLE OF MUTA

THE next day, as soon as it was morning, Khálid began to spread out his men in a long thin line as if he was going to envelop the enemy. The Romans fancied that succour had come to the Muslims and that that was the reason of this new manœuvre. The Romans did not advance to fight. Meanwhile, according to his plan, Khálid withdrew his army from Mūta to Medīna. The Romans were too glad that the fight was over. They did not like to meet Khálid any more. They did not

pursue Muslims. On the contrary, they were fearfully afraid of the Muslims. If three thousand could fight a hundred thousand, what if their numbers increased to a hundred thousand. Woe to the Roman Empire and woe to all who dare oppose these supermen whose greatest happiness was Death in the Path of God.

STRANGE RECEPTION OF KHALID AND HIS MEN

KHALID brought the corpse of Ja'far to Medīna. Muḥammad and the Muslims met them outside Medīna.

Any other General and any other soldiers would have been carried shoulders high and lionised and praised beyond praise. But the Medinites threw dust on the faces of the returning soldiers saying: "O ye run-aways! Ye ran away from the Path of God".

The Prophet replied on their behalf:

"Not run-aways, but if it please God, go-backs once more." But the warriors were actually ashamed of showing their faces to the men. The children and young men took up the cry: "O ye run-aways! ye ran away from the Path of God."

The Prophet and his companions were all in great sorrow on account of the loss of so many brave men and especially of the three generals. Ja'far was like a brother to the Prophet and he actually felt his loss more than that of the others. Ja'far's wife and children also cried bitterly for his loss so soon after his return from a foreign country. Thus ended the Battle of Mūta. It was not a victory for the Muslims in the ordinary sense of the word; but it was a great victory for the Faith of

Islám. It frightened the Romans and determined the Muslims to a sure and decisive victory so that within 12 years of the Prophet's decease and within 15 years of the Battle of Mūta the Roman Empire in the East had lost everything except its name.

THE EXPEDITION OF ZAT AS-SALASAL

SOME weeks after Khálid's return from Syria, Muḥammad sent 'Amr bin 'Áṣ towards Syria to engage an army of Syrians on the northern borders of Arabia. When 'Amr reached the Province of Judhám in a place called Salsal he was afraid of his army being too small to meet the enemy. So he sent for succour and the Prophet sent another army of Muhájirīn under Abu-'Obaidah bin Jarráḥ including such men as Abu-Bakr and 'Omar and he especially warned Abu-'Obaidah not to differ from 'Amr, as 'Amr bin 'Áṣ was a very strong-minded man. When Abu-'Obaidah met 'Amr, the latter said to the former, "You have come as a helper and I am the General of the army." Abu-'Obaidah replied: "The Prophet has said that we should not disagree, therefore, even if you go against me I will follow you." Such was the spirit of discipline amongst the early Muslims. 'Amr performed his prayers (Muslims generally fought after noon-prayers) and defeated the Syrian army. He returned to Medīna after striking terror in the minds of the Romans.

THE EFFECTS OF THE BATTLE OF MUTA

THE Battle of Mūta had very strange effects on the

minds of different communities—the Muslims who should have been pleased with escaping from utter destruction were the least satisfied with it. To them, there were only two courses open—Victory and Martyrdom, but Martyrdom first. Returning home safe and sound without a victory was a thing which they did not and could not understand at all.

The Christians who should have counted it as a victory were thoroughly cowed. Being far-sighted men and having had experience of centuries of warfare, they appreciated the courage, initiative and dash of the Muslims at its true value. To war with a people like that was to court certain disaster—a people who fought like lions and each of whom seemed to possess nine lives. Men like Ja'far (who fought after both his arms had been cut off) and Khálid who broke eight swords in a single afternoon on the heads of his enemies were not made of flesh but of iron. The usual custom in the armies used to be that when the General fell, the army ran but amongst the Muslims each soldier rivalled the General. So the Romans, like wise men, were for leaving the Muslims alone but they were too proud to make peace and the war went on. And Muḥammad? He was not the man to back out of a bargain.

The only people who, like fools, exulted over the apparent catastrophe of the Muslims at Mūta were the Jews and the Meccan unbelievers. No lesson was enough for them. They vainly imagined that the days of Muḥammad were numbered and that the Romans would soon eat him up, so to say. It was, therefore, time to

start harassing him in the South whilst his men were engaged in the North.

THE QURAISH AND THEIR ALLIES BREAK THE TREATY OF HUDAIBIYA

THE Quraish, enemies of Muḥammad, therefore, in violation of the Treaty of Ḥudaibiya, egged on their allies the Banu Bakr to attack Banu Khuzá', the allies of Muḥammad. 'Ikrama and other leaders of the Quraish helped Banu Bakr with arms and secret intrigue. Following this intrigue, one night, whilst Banu Khuzá' were sleeping at a watering place called Watīr, Banu Bakr fell on them, killed them and looted their property. Banu Khuzá' took shelter in Mecca and complained to the Quraish but got no redress.

'Amr bin Sálim of Khuzá' ran to lay his complaint before Muḥammad. He was accompanied by 40 camel-riders and voiced his complaint outside the mosque where Muḥammad was praying in these words:

"O God! I come to Muḥammad to remind
Of the bonds of love which us do bind,
O Prophet of God! Thy help I claim,
Call the servants of God to this aim."

Muḥammad heard their complaint and promised them help as he was bound to do under the Treaty.

Muḥammad sent word to the Quraish—

(1) To pay the usual indemnity for those who had been wrongfully killed,

(2) To desist from helping Banu Bakr, and

(3) To issue a proclamation that the Treaty had been dissolved.

The Quraish agreed only to the last term but as this directly implied that they had been guilty of a breach, they repented of that and sent Abu-Sufyán to Medīna to get the treaty renewed.

One must have a very poor opinion of Muḥammad to think that he would ever think of such a thing. Abu-Sufyán went to the house of Umm-Ḥabība (wife of the Prophet) trying to curry favour with her. He was going to sit down on the carpet or mat where the Prophet used to sit. "Get thee gone," said his daughter. "Is that the way you treat your father?" said Abu-Sufyán. "Not that," said she, "this place is for the Prophet of God and you being a pagan are unholy. So do not defile his carpet."

Abu-Sufyán went away disappointed. Muḥammad would not see him or speak to him at all. He tried Abu-Bakr to intercede for him but was refused. He tried 'Omar and got this reply uttered in great anger: "I to intercede for you with the Prophet of God? By God, if I found an atom of reason to fight you I would do so." Abu-Sufyán tried 'Alī and Fatimah (Prophet's daughter) but no one would dare speak to the Prophet, or wished to do so. 'Alī pulled his leg (and the old man fell into his trap) by saying to him " You are yourself a chief of the Meccans, go to the mosque and proclaim on your own authority that you ask peoples' help to renew the treaty". He did so and returned to Mecca and told the people what had happened at Medīna. The Quraish laughed at him and said, " Woe unto thee! By God, you are only fit to be made fun of". Abu-Sufyán's faith in his idols and in his people was badly shaken.

MUHAMMAD PREPARES FOR THE CONQUEST OF MECCA

MUHAMMAD asked his followers to prepare for war and sent word to all his allies and followers in Arabia to come to him ready for the fight but to keep their preparations absolutely secret. He did not tell anyone where he was going to. People thought he was going to Syria to teach a lesson to the Romans for their having killed his standard-bearers at Mūta. But a few of his intimate friends knew or guessed his secret.

ABI BALTA'S ATTEMPT TO INFORM THE QURAISH

ONE Ḥáṭib bin Abi Balta' who was with Muḥammad's army at Badr and a recognized leader of the Muslims wrote a letter to his relations at Mecca informing them of Muḥammad's intentions. He gave this letter to a female slave of his and sent her towards Mecca. Muḥammad was informed by God about this and sent 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭáliband Zubair bin 'Awwám to get the letter from the woman. They caught her but did not find the letter. 'Alī threatened to search her person if she did not give them the letter. The woman finding no way out of the difficulty opened her hair and there was the letter!

The letter was brought back to Muḥammad and Abi Balta' admitted sending it but said that he was moved by pity for his only son left amongst the Quraish and he was afraid of his death. Muḥammad excused him as he was one of the "Companions of Badr" but God warned him to spare no one in future who allied himself with the unbelievers against the Muslims.

THE QURAISH TAKEN BY UTTER SURPRISE

So successful were Muḥammad's preparations and so well organised and quick that he set out with ten thousand well armed men to conquer Mecca—the same number with which the Meccans and their allies had gone to conquer Medīna. The tables were turned on the Meccans and they knew nothing of his coming till he was at Marrazzahrán, half a day's journey from Mecca. Each tribe had its own leader and its own camp and Muḥammad made them spread out in the desert and asked them to make big fires.

The Meccans were still discussing as to what they should do when 'Abbás (uncle of the Prophet) and a party of Banu Háshim, who were either in the know or were informed as to Muḥammad's approach, left the Quraish and wished to join Muḥammad.

But Muḥammad would not receive them at first and showed anger at the treatment he had received from his own kith and kin after he had left Mecca. 'Abbás was accompanied by Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥárith bin 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib (not Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb bin Ommaya) and by 'Abdullah bin Abi Ommaya bin Mughīra. When Muḥammad refused to admit them, they said: "If you do not take us now, we will be tortured and die of hunger and thirst on the land." Muḥammad was moved and took them in.

When 'Abbás saw the preparations of his nephew's army, he was afraid of the Meccans. Surely, if Muḥammad did not take pity on the unbelieving Meccans they would soon be slaughtered and nothing left of them.

And what, then, of all their relations, friends and families?

THE STRATAGEM OF ABBAS

ABBAS was a man of peace and, though formerly a pagan, he, like Abu-Ṭálib, had always been a friend of Muḥammad. He had, formerly, tried to save Muḥammad from the clutches of the Quraish by giving Muḥammad timely warning of their attack on Medīna, he must now save the Meccans from the clutches of Muḥammad by giving them his advice and kind warning. He and Muḥammad consulted the situation and Muḥammad prayed most devoutly that 'Abbás might be the means of the conquest of Mecca without bloodshed.

'Abbás, therefore, set out on his journey of peace. He borrowed Muḥammad's white mare named Duldul, sent to him by the ruler of Egypt and rode with it towards Mecca. His object was to tell the people of Mecca that resistance to Muḥammad was useless, as he was supported by an army which could not be opposed and that the best course for them was to go out and submit to him.

ABU-SUFYAN CAPTURED

As luck would have it, he heard Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb and Budail bin Waraqá' (who had come out to see if there was any truth in the rumours of danger coming to Mecca) speaking in this fashion:

Abu-Sufyán: "I have never seen such fires and such an army".

Budail: "By God, these are Khuzá' bent on war."

Abu-Sufyán: "Khuzá' are few in numbers and weak in strength for fires like these and for an army of this size."

'Abbás recognized Abu-Sufyán's voice and said:

"Woe to thee, Abu-Ḥanẓala" (another name for Abu-Sufyán.)

Abu-Sufyán: "Abul-Faḍal?" (another name for 'Abbás.)

'Abbás: "Woe to thee Abu-Sufyán! Here is Muḥammad and he is going to enter Mecca by force; and woe unto the Quraish when he does that!"

The Meccans recognized Muḥammad's mare which could be distinguished amongst a thousand.

"What can be done?" asked Abu-Sufyán. The three of them started going back to Mecca to persuade the people to yield to Muḥammad. When they were passing the fires of 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb, they were recognized and Abu-Sufyán was captured. 'Abbás wished to save his life but 'Omar rushed to the tent of the Prophet asking the Prophet's permission to strike off Abu-Sufyán's head. 'Abbás also rushed in and said that Abu-Sufyán was under his protection. A hot discussion took place between 'Abbás and 'Omar. Finally the Prophet ordered 'Abbás to bring Abu-Sufyán to him the next morning.

Muḥammad held a court in his tent the next morning and when Abu-Sufyán was brought to him he said:

"Abu-Sufyán! Woe to thee, has not the time come for thee to know '*Lá-iláh ill-Alláh*'?" There is no deity but God.

Abu-Sufyán: "My father and mother be thy sacrifice —By God, surely, if I was sure that there was a deity besides God, it would have been of some avail to me."

The Prophet: "Woe to thee, O Abu-Sufyán!

Has not the time come for thee to know that I am the messenger of God?"

Abu-Sufyán: "By God, it is so, I had been thinking like that up to this moment in my mind."

The fact is that Abu-Sufyán had heard the Qur-án; he had witnessed the enthusiasm of Muḥammad's followers; he had heard what Heracleus had said about Muḥammad; he had seen the wonderful signs of God all pointing out the truth of Muḥammad's mission and his faith in idols had been shaken but he was reluctant to lose his position of honour amongst the Arabs and he was also afraid of their jibes and taunts. He acknowledged the faith now but not in clear terms. 'Abbás was in fear of 'Omar prevailing upon the Prophet to have Abu-Sufyán (the relentless foe of Muḥammad and Muslims) executed. So he addressed Abu-Sufyán and said, "You had better acknowlege your faith and say, 'I bear witness that there is no deity but God (Alláh) and that Muḥammad is the messenger of God,' unless you wish your head struck off." Abu-Sufyán acknowledged his faith.

'Abbás then addressed Muḥammad and said: "O Prophet of God! Abu-Sufyán is proud of his Islám. Do him some favour."

The Prophet said: "All right, he who enters the house of Abu-Sufyán shall be safe. He who shuts himself up in his own house and locks his door shall be safe and he who enters the Mosque at Mecca shall be safe."

MUHAMMAD'S LOVE FOR PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP WITH THE QURAISH

HAD Muḥammad followed the wishes of some of his

companions, Mecca this day would have been ransacked. But Muḥammad was praying for a bloodless victory and God had sent him an ally in the person of 'Abbás, a mediator whom both sides could listen to. The facts as stated above are uncontested but opinions differ as to whether Abu-Sufyán came to Muḥammad's tent by a pre-arranged plan or by accident. As the chief actors in this drama never disclosed their inner knowledge, the matter shall, for ever, remain a guess. The writer of this book agrees with those who say that Abu-Sufyán had become a Muslim at heart when he came back unsuccessful from Medīna on his mission to renew the treaty of Ḥudaibiya and that 'Abbás had arranged for this dramatic meeting between him and Muḥammad. But God knows better.

MUHAMMAD'S PRECAUTIONS ON ENTERING MECCA

On the morrow, Muḥammad ordered entry into Mecca. Marrazzahrán is only a short journey from Mecca. He ordered that there should be no fighting, unless unavoidable, and that Abu-Sufyán should be kept in custody till the Muslims had entered Mecca and till he had carried out his message of peace and that he must not be allowed to escape on any account. Who knows, he might be pretending to be a Muslim and do mischief.

The Muslim armies marched on with the Prophet's green flag flying before them and Muḥammad now leading his forces surrounded by his generals of Mecca and Medīna, armed in mail, *cap-á-pie*, on prancing horses and well-fed camels. Each tribe had its own leader and a separate flag.

As they passed Abu-Sufyán, the old man's pride and jealousy sgainst Muḥammad were struggling in his breast with his newly acquired faith. The position he had coveted for himself and his family now belonged to Muḥammad. His Islám was not strong enough yet to make him think of anything but earthly values, so he said to 'Abbás :

"O 'Abbás ! no one can oppose this army and no one has the strength to do it. By God, O Abul-Faḍal ! the son of thy brother will be a great king tomorrow."

Then he went to his people who had gathered to witness this scene and cried out at the top of his voice :

"O ye Quraish ! here is Muḥammad come to you with a force which cannot be opposed. Whoever enters the house of Abu-Sufyán will be safe, and whoever shuts himself up in his own house and locks the door shall be safe and so will be he who enters the mosque."

Muḥammad marched on till he reached *Za-Ṭwa* whence he could see Mecca lying before him; his standards waving in the air; his men marching on the Path of God and animated with God's spirit.

He stopped on his mount and thanked God from the bottom of his heart at having opened the gates of Mecca to him and allowed him and his companions to enter in peace and safety.

THE ORDER OF THE MUSLIM ARMY ON ITS ENTRY INTO MECCA

MUHAMMAD was always thankful to God for His favours but he never forgot to take his own measures for the protection of the Muslims. He divided his army

into four divisions and gave them strict orders not to fight and not to shed blood unless they were absolutely forced to do so.

Zubair bin 'Awwám was in charge of the Left Wing and was ordered to enter Mecca from the North.

Khálid bin Walīd was in charge of the Right Wing and was ordered to enter Mecca on its lower side.

Sa'd bin 'Ubáda at the head of Medinites was ordered to enter from the West.

Abu-'Ubaida bin Jarráḥ at the head of the Muhájirīn with Muḥammad himself were to enter Mecca from the heights of Jabal Hind.

But it came to the ears of the Prophet that Abu-'Ubaida had said that the day was going to be a day of Battle and they would have the Freedom of Mecca that day (meaning that shedding blood would be allowed to them), Muḥammad had the standard, immediately, removed into the hands of Abu-'Ubaida's son Qais—Muḥammad was not going to allow any excuses for war.

IKRAMA FIGHTS KHALID AND IS DEFEATED

ALL the armies of Muslims entered Mecca peacefully except that of Khálid. He was entering the city on its lower side where the most obstinate amongst the Quraish and Banu Bakr under Muḥammad's inveterate enemies Ṣafwán, Suhail and 'Ikrama shot the Muslims with their arrows. Khálid, however, was more than a match for them. The Muslims had two men killed and the enemy 13 or 18. The leaders of the enemy fled. Muḥammad had reached the top of Jabal Hind and when he saw

swords shining on his right he was angry but on matters being explained to him he said : " There is option in what God gives us to choose."

MUHAMMAD MASTER OF MECCA AND THE MECCANS

MUHAMMAD'S tent was pitched on the top of Jabal Hind close to the tombs of Abu-Ṭálib and Khadījah. He was asked " Would not you like to rest in your house ? " He said " Certainly not. They have left no house for me in Mecca." He rested in his tent. And the memories of his childhood, youth and marriage came back to his mind. And how in his fortieth year, the Call from God had come to him and how he had come home with fear and hope and how Khadījah had consoled him and how Gabriel had brought him the glad news :

> And surely the Future is better for thee than the Past.
> And surely in time thy Lord will bestow on thee so that thou shalt be satisfied. (Qur-án, 93 : 4-5.)

And now God's Promise was being fulfilled in this world and more was to follow hereafter. How could he sufficiently thank God for His bestowals ? No one could. He forgot all the persecutions he had suffered, all the abuses that had been showered on him and all the attempts made on his life. His eyes were full of tears of submission to God. God was the Truth. To Him belonged the disposal of all affairs. Man was but an atom. But what a fateful atom ? Everything in heaven and earth was going round with God's praises and His glorification. It was not for man to sit down. He soon got up, rode his she-camel Qaṣwa and made seven

circuits (Ṭwáf) of the House of God.

MUHAMMAD ABOLISHES HEREDITARY PRIDE

WHEN he had finished the Ṭwáf he called 'Othmán bin Ṭalḥa, opened the door of the Ka'ba and stood there. The people gathered round him in the mosque and Muḥammad delivered an address as follows: —

"There is no deity but God (Alláh), He exists by Himself without a partner. He has made good His promise and helped His servant; He alone routed the Confederates. All pride, all ancient customs of revenge shedding blood and for claims (on account of feudal fights) are under my feet (*i.e.*, are abolished). Nothing remains except the custody of the Ka'ba and the supplying of water to the pilgrims.

"O ye people of the Quraish! Surely God has abolished from you all pride of the time of Ignorance and all pride in your ancestry, (because) all men are descended from Adam, and Adam was made out of dust (or earth)".

> O ye mankind! surely We have made you out of male and female,
> And We have made you into races and tribes that you may recognise one another.
> Surely the most honourable of you in the sight of God is the most reverential of you... (Qur-án, 49 : 13.)

Let all those who study Muḥammad's Life and who wish to be just, ponder over this address of Muḥammad. On this day, he was the undoubted ruler over Mecca and

Medina and other parts of Arabia with an army which was, for the time being, sufficient to assert his will. Does this man, Muḥammad, ask people to bow down to him, to pay him any revenues or taxes or threaten them with pains and penalties if they disobey him? Does he declare any martial law in the territory he has taken by peaceful conquest? Or do any of the hundred and one things that kings, conquerors and rulers of mankind do appeal to him?

On the contrary, he abolishes all pride in race, heredity, or wealth. All men, he declares, are equal in the sight of God as they are all evolved from this very earth. He alone is most honourable in the sight of God who is most reverential to Him. Reverence to God and obedience to His Laws are the only things that can make man great and noble. This address was delivered over 1300 years ago and no man can improve upon it. It is a charter of the Rights of Man against the Tyranny of Despots—be they individuals, societies or corporations.

MUHAMMAD'S PARDON TO HIS ENEMIES

AFTER he had finished his address he looked at the Quraish for they were there, and asked:

"O ye people of the Quraish! What do you think I am going to do to you?"

They said: "O noble brother, and O son of a noble brother! goodness."

He said: "No blame on you be this day. Go away, you are free."

Muḥammad was standing amongst his former

enemies who had abused him, stoned him, reviled and banished him; encompassed his death and fought him numerous fights and now having power over life and death, he takes no hostages, imposes no penalties, uses no force but in five words " Go away, you are free " changes the whole course of history. The fact is that Muḥammad loved all mankind. He hated nobody. But there are certain things which are beyond human control. Those who find fault with Muḥammad are doing nothing but injustice to themselves.

MUHAMMAD PURIFIES THE KA'BA

AFTER the address and the free pardon granted to his enemies, Muḥammad entered the Ka'ba and found it full of pictures and idols. There were pictures of angels as females and of prophets, chief amongst whom was a picture of Abraham. There was the precious stone statue of the chief deity of the Meccans, Ḥobal. Muḥammad had them all removed and the Ka'ba purified literally and metaphoriclly of all that was unclean. And as he helped in this purification he recited the verse of the Qur-án:

> Truth has come and falsehood has disappeared.
> Surely falsehood is bound to disappear. (Qur-án,15 : 81.)

And thus the conquest of Mecca was in fact nothing but the Conquest of Truth over falsehood, in which Muḥammad and the Muslims played their part but in which the real General was the Will of God.

Those who do not believe in this " Will of God ", or believing in it, do not appreciate its force, will never

understand Islám, Qur-án, or Muḥammad. The whole Philosophy of Islám lies in trying to discover and to act according to the Will of God. Whoever wanders away from this basic principle of Islám will never find consolation in anything that exists, and least of all in his own soul.

THE ANSAR'S FEARS

SEEING how good and merciful Muḥammad had been to the Meccans and how immense was his love and care of the House of God, the Anṣár began to fear that he might stay there for ever. Muhammad came to know this and said :

"God be my protection, my living and my dying are with you", the words which he had used at the Pledge of ʻAkaba. Muḥammad always kept his word no matter what happened.

MUHAMMAD PRAYS IN THE MOSQUE

WHEN the Ka'ba had been purified Muḥammad ordered Bilál to climb its roof and call the people to prayer and from that day till this, the call has been repeated five times a day in that Mosque, and may it go on as long as the world lasts, at Mecca and everywhere else. There is no piece of human composition which can rival the Call to Prayer of the Muslims in its purity of thought and simplicity of language. And Muḥammad led the prayers with thousands following him. His saying that his Pleasure was in his prayers has already been quoted.

Though ten odd persons were designated by Muḥammad as guilty of crimes deserving death, all but

four were forgiven. Even Hind, wife of Sufyán, who chewed Ḥamza's liver raw was forgiven. 'Ikrama was forgiven. Ṣafwán bin Ommaya was forgiven. Of the four persons killed three were men who were guilty of murders and one was a singer who is said to have incited people against the person of the Prophet by his singing.

MUHAMMAD DECLARES MECCA TO BE A SACRED TERRITORY FOR EVER—NO BLOOD IS TO BE SHED AND NO TREE TO BE CUT

ALL that is stated above was accomplished on the very first day of Muḥammad's stay at Mecca. On the morrow, he heard that Khuzá' had killed a pagan of the tribe of Hudhail within the sacred territory. He was angry and addressed the people thus :

"O ye people ! God made Mecca a sacred territory the day He made the heavens and the earth (*i.e.* it is His Eternal Will). Therefore it is declared Sacred once, twice and three times to the Day of Resurrection. It is not allowed to anyone who believes in God and the Future Day to shed blood therein or to cut a tree. It was not allowed before me and it is not allowed to anyone who comes after me. And it was not allowed to me until lately, on account of God's anger on its residents but it has returned to its sacredness as before. Let him who is here carry it to him who is absent. If anyone says to you that the messenger of God shed blood therein then say ye that God had allowed him and God has not allowed you to do so, O people of Khuzá'. Remove your hands from bloodshed. I must pay indemnity on your

behalf. Whoever is guilty of bloodshed hereafter, his family must be responsible for it. They may kill the killer or tie him up."

He paid the indemnity. The man killed was a pagan. The Meccans wondered at this castigation of Muḥammad's allies by Muḥammad, and at his justice, fairness and forgiveness. They came in groups to join Islám. Even Hind became a Muslim.

And thus was God's saying justified:

> Repel (evil) 'with that which is better and lo! he between whom and thee there was enmity shall be as if he was (thy) warm friend .. (Qur-án, 41 : 34.)

MUHAMMAD'S FIFTEEN DAYS' WORK AT MECCA AND KHALID'S ZEAL IN FAITH OVER-STEPPING HIS INSTRUCTIONS

MUHAMMAD gave orders that none of the faithful should keep any idols in their houses and taught the Meccan converts the principles of the Faith of Islám. Muḥammad also sent missionaries with orders to destroy idols without causing bloodshed.

Khálid went to Banu Shaibán to destroy the statue of 'Uzza which he did. The people took up arms against him. He demanded the laying down of arms but they would not obey. Khálid tied some of them and a few of them were executed for disobeying his orders. When the Prophet heard that, he said: "O God! I declare to Thee my abhorence of what Khálid has done." Then he sent 'Alī to Judhaima with money. After 'Alī had paid all the blood-money he distributed the balance amongst the people. The people marvelled at Muḥammad's

evenhanded justice towards all—Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In 15 days Muḥammad had wiped out all traces of idol-worship of more than 2000 years' standing. He appointed 'Othmán bin Ṭalḥa and his sons as guardians of the Ka'ba in perpetuity and the office of the supply of water to the pilgrims to 'Abbás and his children.

CHAPTER XIX

BATTLE OF ḤUNAIN, AUṬAS AND ṬAIF

8 A.H.=629-630 A.C.

ONE would have thought that the peaceful conquest of Mecca by Muḥammad would have been enough to convince the pagan Arabs that further fighting with him was useless. But no. The Arabs had not been subject to a king or ruler for ages ; and besides, fighting was in their blood just as it has been in the blood of some of the tribes on the North-West Frontier of India. These centuries' old habits could not be eliminated in a day. And there were many other reasons why the pagan Arabs should dislike Muḥammad. He was destroying their idols which represented deities in whose names the chiefs made their living. Muḥammad was also imposing discipline upon the Arabs. Discipline meant restraint. Muḥammad made the Muslims fast, pray and give alms. This was extremely distasteful to the unbelievers as the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* points out. The Arabs were intensely suspicious and knew by instinct that Muḥammad would not be content till he had converted the whole of Arabia. There was no union or discipline amongst various tribes of Arabia. It was to bring about this union and discipline in Arabia that God had sent Muḥammad. It was not his only task. But it was the one on which depended everything for the

success of Islám. Muḥammad realized this. And the Arabs made it easy for him by fighting him. In this way they submitted to the Will of God.

HAWAZIN AND THAQIF

THE reader may remember that Thaqīf were the ruling tribe at Ṭá'if when Muḥammad visited that town and preached Islám there. They had stoned Muḥammad till his shoes were full of blood and he had to flee from them. Ṭá'if had also the temple of Al-Lát, one of the chief deities of the pagans. Thaqīf had always despised Muḥammad.

Between Mecca and Ṭá'if lived another tribe called Hawázin who were also very powerful and warlike and, being situated in hilly districts, had never been subject to the Meccans. Had it not been for the fact that Muḥammad took Mecca by surprise, the Hawázin and Thaqīf might have joined the Quraish against Muḥammad but Muḥammad, as usual, anticipated them.

Whilst Muḥammad was preaching Islám at Mecca the Hawázin and Thaqīf were getting ready to make war on Muḥammad. The tribes of Naṣr and Jushm also joined them but not Ka'b and Kiláb.

Jushm had a leader named Duraid bin Ṣamma who was too old to fight, but he was a man of wisdom. Málik bin 'Auf was actually leading the Hawázin and Thaqīf. These two tribes hit upon a new plan of war. They knew that the Arabs had lost all their previous wars against Muḥammad because they ran away after the fall of their leaders. Hence Málik bin 'Auf advised them to take their wives, children, cattle and wealth with them so that no one would run away.

They marched to the hills of Auṭás to the south-east of Mecca and about a day or day and a half's journey from Mecca.

When Duraid bin Ṣamma heard the neighing of horses, the bleating of sheep, the groaning of camels and the yelling of children he asked Málik bin 'Auf what was all this about. Málik said that that was meant to prevent the fighters from running away. Duraid disagreed with him and said: "For victory you require fighters and swords and shooters of arrows. If the fight goes against you these incumbrances will be all the worse for you." The people agreed with Málik. They were bent on victory and had made sure of it. Málik had a plan which could not fail. Duraid also accompanied the army as he approved of Málik's plan and it was really an excellent one.

The Hawázin and Thaqīf encamped in the valley of Ḥunain and posted their archers covering the Pass in the valley which Muḥammad and his forces must cross before they could reach the other side.

Málik's plan was to attack the Muslims with arrows in the narrow Pass and to rout them, so that when they retreated, the Hawázin would fall upon them from the hills and easily conquer Mecca which was not very far off. Málik's archers were concealed by rocks and Muḥammad's men could not possibly dislodge them. This plan was kept absolutely secret and success was made certain by taking up all the necessary positions long before Muḥammad had reached Ḥunain.

MUHAMMAD SETS OUT TO MEET THE HAWAZIN AND THE THAQIF

It was two weeks after Muḥammad's stay at Mecca that he heard of the preparations of Hawázin and Thaqīf. When the news reached him he lost no time in meeting the coming attack and set out in great state with 12,000 soldiers—10,000 of his companions who had come with him from Medīna and 2000 new converts from Mecca.

The Muslims were elated with their numbers and with their preparations. Even a devout man like Abu-Bakr is reported to have said: "This time we are more numerous than the enemy" or words to that effect. Others are reported to have said: "No one can overpower us on account of our numbers," not knowing what was in store for them.

Abu-Sufyán, 'Abbás and the other Meccan chiefs were with this army in full armour, accompanied by horsemen, riders on camels and other camels laden with provisions and arms. Each tribe carried its standard in front of it, and the whole army moved with great eclat till they reached this side of Ḥunain at evening. The Muslims encamped at the entrance of the Pass in full expectation of victory in the morning.

THE BATTLE OF HUNAIN

At dawn Muḥammad's army moved on. Muḥammad was riding his white mare, Duldul, in the rear of the army. Khálid bin Walīd at the head of the Sulaim was in the van. They entered the narrow Pass and were

cooped in between the walls of the Pass. It was still semi-dark and hazy. The Muslims could see no enemy, but the enemy knew where the Muslims were. And according to Málik bin 'Auf's pre-arranged plan the Hawázin and Thaqīf rained a regular shower of arrows on the Muslims. The Muslims could do nothing. The Meccan recruits were the first to retreat and the rest also not knowing what to do fled panic-stricken.

Never in the whole history of Muḥammad's mission had anything like this happened before.

Tribe after tribe ran past Muḥammad without listening to his cries till he, who was in the rear, was alone, with the soldiers gone away and none in front of him except the enemy. God tries His messengers but they never fail. When Pharaoh overtook the Israelites under Moses as he was going out of Egypt they said :

> Surely we are caught,
> He (Moses) said : "Never ! Surely my Lord is with me, He will soon guide me." (Qur-án, 26 : 61-62.)

God is always with His messengers. He was with Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus in their troubles and He was now with Muḥammad, though the people had fled. Muḥammad was sure of God's help and stood his ground. That proved that he was from God and not from himself. If he had been a liar he would now have run away. The messenger of God remained firm like a rock.

But his Meccan companions were not so sure. Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb with a satrical smile on his face said : "These people who conquered the Quraish yesterday will not stop fleeing till they reach the sea."

Shaiba bin 'Othmán bin Abi Ṭalḥa said : " Today I will have my revenge on Muḥammad." His father had been killed at Oḥod. And Kalda bin Ḥanbal said : " The witch-craft has vanished today." The work of 18 years of the mission of Muḥammad was in the balance. Had his God left him ? thought the doubters. If not, where was His help and why all this panic ?

The people ran but not Muḥammad. Some of his Anṣár and the Banu Háshim did not leave him.

The Hawázin and Thaqīf seeing the Muslims utterly routed descended from their positions and were quite near to Muḥammad and ready to attack him. Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥárith bin Abd ul-Muṭṭalib caught hold of the reins of Muḥammad's mare and 'Abbás who had a giant's voice shouted :

" O ye Anṣár who sheltered and helped the Muslims, O ye Emigrants who took the Pledge under the Tree, Muḥammad is alive and here. Come ye this side." He shouted thus till the hills echoed. And the Prophet himself said :

" I am the Prophet of God, there is no falsehood about me, I am the descendant of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib.

And a miracle happened. The words " Muḥammad is alive......the Anṣár.........the Muhájirīn, the Pledge under the Tree " sank into the hearts of the fleeing Muslims and lo! like thunder and lightning they came back to the call. Their hearts now quite at their ease, and their courage not only recovered but redoubled.

The Encounter

THE morning mist had by this time disappeared from the

sky and the mist of doubt and vacillation also disappeared from the hearts of the Muslims. They could see their enemy now. The Prophet threw a handful of dust in the face of the enemy saying: "Your faces be disfigured" and lo! the proud conquerors of the moment before were now grovelling in the dust. The Muslims attacked them so fiercely, that the Hawázin forgot all their plans and their boasts. They fled leaving their women, children and all their property behind. The booty which fell into the hands of the Muslims this day consisted of

(1) 28,000 camels
(2) 40,000 sheep
(3) 4,000 pieces of silver
(4) 6,000 prisoners.

The prisoners were removed to Wadi al-Ji' rána and Muḥammad set in pursuit of the fleeing enemy.

The Muslims caught the fleeing Hawázin at Auṭás. Heavy fighting took place there but the enemy fled. Some of them under Málik bin 'Auf ran towards Ṭá'if and could not be pursued any further. Málik bin 'Auf took shelter with the Thaqīf at Ṭá'if.

HUNAIN AND OHOD COMPARED

THE Battle of Ḥunain was the exact parallel of the Battle of Oḥod with the exception that the Muslims were complete masters in their victory whilst the Quraish did not and could not press their advantage home.

In the Battle of Ḥunain Málik bin 'Auf had placed his archers on the hill just as Muḥammad had placed his at Oḥod. The Muslims fled at Ḥunain just as the

Quraish had fled at Oḥod. The Muslims came back to fight at Ḥunain just as did the Quraish at Oḥod. In both cases the coming down of the archers from their stations proved ruinous to their side. Oḥod had been won by Muslims and was lost. Ḥunain had been won by the Hawázin and was lost. But here the parallel stops. Muḥammad obtained such booty at Ḥunain as nobody had ever dreamt of. The Quraish came back empty-handed from Oḥod. And it was possible for Ḥunain to have proved the most disastrous battle for the Muslims. Who saved the situation for Muslims in both these Battles? The unbelievers would say "Muḥammad" but the Muslim with full faith in his heart would reply: GOD.

However, God manifested His Power through Muḥammad and his faithful companions. But in order that the Muslims might not become proud, He made them taste defeat before victory in one case, and victory before repulse in the other.

THE QUR-AN ON THE BATTLE OF HUNAIN

GOD reminds Muslims of this battle in the following words which explain themselves:

> Certainly God has already helped you in many fields,
> And on the day of Hunain when your large numbers made you look strange (or made you proud),
> But they availed you naught
> And the land, in spite of its vastness, became straitened to you,
> Then you turned back flying.

Then God sent down His calm upon His messenger and upon the faithful,
And He sent armies which you saw not,
And He made the disbelievers suffer...(Qur-án, 9 : 25-26.)

MUHAMMAD LAYS SIEGE TO TA'IF

THE victory of Ḥunain had been won at a heavy cost.

Muḥammad was not the man to let his enemy have rest. He followed Málik bin 'Auf to Ṭá'if and laid siege to it.

But though Muḥammad laid siege to Ṭá'if for a whole month, the besieged would not come out and give him battle. They contented themselves with shooting arrows which killed a number of Muslims and wounded quite a lot.

Muḥammad even tried to undermine the fort but without success. When he made sure that the siege was going to be a long one and the cost of victory was going to be out of all proportion to the loss of life, and as the sacred months were approaching, he raised the siege to attend to more pressing work waiting him at Mecca and Medīna. But before he left Ṭá'if, he promised them that he would come back unless they surrendered.

MUHAMMAD RETURNS TO JI'RANA FROM TA'IF

Distribution of the Spoils of Ḥunain

MUHAMMAD on his way to Mecca stopped at Wadi al-Ji'rána where there were the prisoners and the booty. He divided the booty as ordained in the Qur-án—

one-fifth to God and His messenger and the balance for the Muslim fighters. After this distribution a deputation of the Hawázin came there and begged him for mercy as there were his relations amongst their tribe and one of the prisoners was Shaimá', his foster sister, daughter of Ḥalimah. He let Shaimá' go back to her home according to her wish, with gifts from himself.

The Prophet was moved by their entreaties for mercy. He told them that he would release his share of the prisoners as well as the share of Banu 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib but that they should come to his people after noon-prayers and say:

"We ask the Prophet of God to intercede for us with the Muslims and we ask the Muslims to intercede for us with the Prophet of God with regard to our women and children."

The Hawázin did so, when Muḥammad said : [illegible]s for me and Banu 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, what you ask is yours." With the exception of a few individuals all agreed to this proposal and released their prisoners.

The Hawázin were extremely pleased to get back their dear ones without any payment. Never before had any Arab conqueror been so generous.

MALIK BIN 'AUF'S CONVERSION TO ISLAM

MUHAMMAD talked to Hawázin about Málik bin 'Auf and promised to return him his property, and a hundred camels in addition, if he would surrender himself. Málik immediately became a Muslim.

The Muslims who had come with the Prophet from

Medīna were afraid that the Prophet would take away their shares from them in order to give what he had promised to Málik; but when the Prophet heard this he was very angry. He had a very strict and impartial division made of the whole property.

MUHAMMAD'S GENEROSITY

THE fifth share of the spoils was at Muḥammad's disposal. He hardly kept anything for himself, but, in order to gain the love of his former enemies, he distributed the greater part of it amongst them—the men who had plotted to kill him. Some of his donations may be mentioned here:

(1) Abu-Sufyán (his former relentless foe) got 300 camels and 100 pieces of silver.
(2) Ḥakīm bin Ḥuzám, 200 camels.
(3) Naḍīr bin Ḥárith bin Kalda, 100 camels.
(4) Safwán bin Ommaya, one of the three who joined Banu Bakr in breaking the Treaty of Ḥudaibiya, 100 camels.
(5) Qais bin 'Adi, 100 camels.
(6) Suhail bin 'Amr of Ḥudaibiya fame, 100 camels.
(7) Ḥwaiṭab bin 'Abd ul-'Uzá, 100 camels.
(8) Iqra' bin Ḥábis, 100 camels.
(9) 'Uainiya bin Ḥiṣn, the looter of Medinite camels, 100 camels.
(10) Málik bin 'Auf, the leader of the enemy at Ḥunain, 100 camels.

Many others got 50 camels each. All this was out of the one-fifth share assigned to God and His messenger.

Muḥammad gave away to his former Meccan enemies everything that they desired and that he could bestow on them.

THE ANSAR NOT PLEASED

WHEN the Anṣár saw how generous Muḥammad had been to his kinsmen, they grumbled in secret and said that they had been treated unfairly. Sa'd bin 'Ubáda carried the news to Muḥammad who ordered Sa'd to gather his men together. When they were gathered together the Prophet came to them and said :

"O ye Anṣár ! What is this talk which has reached me from you and what is this new thing you have found in your souls ?

"When I came to you were you not in error and God guided you ? Were you not poor and God made you rich ? Were you not each other's enemies and God put love into your hearts ?"

The Anṣár : "Yes, God and His messenger are most Bountiful and most Graceful."

Muḥammad : "Would not you answer me, ye Anṣár ?"

Anṣár : "What answer can we give thee, O Prophet of God ? All bounty and grace belong to God and His messenger."

Muḥammad : "But, by God, if you had wished, you might have said and you would surely have been right and I would confirm your saying thus :

"Thou didst come to us belied and we confirmed thy truth ; thou wast forsaken and we helped thee ; thou wast driven away and we sheltered thee ; thou wast poor

and we consoled thee. O Anṣár ! I have made use of the pelf of this world to gain the love of the people that they may become Muslims and entrusted you to your Islám. Are not you, ye Anṣár ! happy that whilst people take away sheep and camels, you take home the messenger of God with you ? I swear by Him in whose hands is Muḥammad's life, had it not been for the Hijrat I would have been a man of the Anṣár. If people choose one path, and the Anṣár choose another, I would choose the path of the Anṣár.

"O God ! have mercy on (or be bountiful to) the Anṣár, the children of the Anṣár and the children of the children of the Anṣár."

The Anṣár were so moved with this speech that their beards were wet with tears. They could find no words to express their gratitude at this most heart-exhilarating speech of the Prophet. All they could say was :

" We are happy with the messenger of God as to the division and our share."

THE INNER MEANING OF MUHAMMAD'S SPEECH TO THE ANSAR

THE meaning of this speech of Muḥammad is that the real value of Life is in Love, not in wealth. He who has the love of his people has something more than wealth can buy.

Muḥammad was not only a messenger of God but the wisest and the most beloved of men. He showed people how the saying " Love thy enemy " can be carried into effect,

All this discussion took place at Ji'rána and when every one was satisfied and happy, Muḥammad returned to Mecca, performed 'Umra or the shorter Pilgrimage; appointed 'Attáb bin Usaid his deputy over Mecca and M'ádh bin Jabal as a religious teacher of the Meccan people and himself returned to Medīna with the Anṣár and the Muhájirīn to attend to other matters which were brewing in the North of Arabia.

Thus ended this war of the Arabs against Muḥammad. The Battle of Ḥunain had been the most prosperous and successful one for Muḥammad and the Muslims. In one journey he had subdued three of the most warlike peoples of Arabia. What he took from them with the left hand he gave them back with the right, himself living in poverty as ever before. He could have, if he were a lover of the goods of this world, kept thousands of camels and sheep for himself out of the booty. But he was sent as a blessing to mankind and not a tax-master or a tyrant. His wives at Medīna had no jewellery. His household furniture consisted of mats and coarse mantles which he used both for covering his person and his bed. Once when his sleeping mattress was made fuller and softer than usual and consequently he slept longer than was his custom, he was displeased with his household and had the mattress changed to its old semi-comfortable condition.

One cannot but pity those who belie him and call him evil names. God has not created any man in vain. He who hates God's creation hates God. It is not right for the confessors of one religion to abuse or hate those

who profess something different. Religion belongs to God and He alone can be the judge of man in what belongs to Him entirely. To man belongs love of mankind, humility of spirit and the doing of good deeds, trusting in God that in the end all matters will be settled once for ever, and that no one will be treated unjustly whatsoever his religion.

OTHER EVENTS OF THE 8TH YEAR OF HEGIRA 629-630 A.C.

The Effect of the Conquest of Mecca and the Victory of Hunain

MUHAMMAD came back to Medīna fully satisfied with his efforts in the cause of Islám and the warfare of the Muslims. He, as well as the Arabs, realised that the days of fighting in Arabia were over. Muḥammad's authority from Syria to Yemen was now an unquestioned fact. Nothing succeeds like success.

Whereas, formerly, Muḥammad had to send missionaries to preach Islám, and emissaries to make alliances, emissaries of the Arabs began to pour into Medīna seeking information regarding Islám and asking to become Muḥammad's allies. The Seven Years' War with the Arabs had been a most powerful propaganda for Islám. Even if Muḥammad had sent ten thousand missionaries over the length and breadth of Arabia he could not have received such homage unto God as he did by means of his successful wars. All opposition to him within the four corners of Arabia had vanised as if by a magic wand.

THE CONQUEST OF MECCA AND THE OPINION OF MUSLIM SAVANTS

SAYS Imám Bukhári :

"The Arabs were waiting for the Quraish to become Muslims and they used to say 'Let him (Muḥammad) and his people (the Quraish) alone. If he conquers, he is surely a true Prophet'. So that when Mecca was conquered, all the tribes hastened to become Muslims."

Ibn-Hishám, one of the greatest authorities on the life of Muḥammad, says :

"The Arabs were waiting, with regard to Islám, the decision of the struggle between the Quraish and the Prophet of God (God's Peace and Blessings be with him). And the reason for this was that the Quraish were their leaders and guides and were the guardians of the House and of the Sacred Mosque. They were also the descendants of Abraham through Ishmael and the acknowleged leaders of the Arabs. And it was the Quraish who had started fighting the Prophet of God and opposing him (on all occasions). When Mecca was conquered and Islám overtook it, the Arabs realised that there was no power left to fight Muḥammad and that he was their friend and not their enemy; they entered the faith of God in large numbers as God says:

> When the help of God and victory shall appear
> And thou shalt see men entering the faith of God in large groups. (Qur-án, 110 : 1-2.)

A rough estimate of the spread of Islám may be made from the following figures :

(1) In 2 A.H. Muḥammad could only muster 305

men capable to meet the Quraish at Badr.

(2) In 3 A.H. he had an army of 700 men to meet the 3000 of the Quraish at Oḥod.

(3) In 5 A.H. he had 3000 Medinites to defend the Fosse against 10,000 Confederates.

(4) In 6 A.H. he had 1400 pilgrims with him at Ḥudaibiya.

(5) In 6 A.H. he had 1500 warriors at Khaibar against the Jews.

(6) In 8 A.H. he had 10,000 soldiers for the conquest of Mecca.

(7) In 8 A.H. he had 12,000 fighters at Ḥunain.

(8) In 9 A.H. he had 30,000 soldiers with him to meet rumoured invasion of Arabia by the Romans, and that in a year of extreme scarcity and at the hottest time of the year.

(9) In 10 A.H. he had 100,000 pilgrims with him to Mecca.

(10) At his death the whole of Arabia from Syria to Aden and from Jeddah to Iraq was a Muslim country and one could travel from one end to the other without fear, in perfect safety.

The deputations sent by various tribes will be noted in a later chapter.

Whilst the Prophet was happy on account of his successful journey to Mecca, his daughter Zainab lay sick. She had been assaulted and wounded by two of the Quraish when she was emigrating from Mecca to Medīna and had lain on her sick bed ever since. She now joined the soul of her mother Khadījah.

Umm-Kulthum, second wife of 'Othmán bin 'Affán, was also dead so that the Prophet had only one daughter Faṭimah now left to him. The Prophet was extremely sorry for Zainab's death. She had been faithful to her husband who was one of the captives at Badr and whom she redeemed by sending her own necklace inherited from her mother Khadījah. This necklace had been sent to her by Muḥammad.

BIRTH OF IBRAHIM

MUHAMMAD was now sixty years of age and had no male issue. By God's favour he got a son from Mária, the lady sent to him (together with Sereen) by the Ruler of Egypt. Muḥammad was so happy at the birth of a son whom he named Ibráhim that he could hardly find words to thank God for His favour. Mária was promoted in his esteem and he gave her a separate house and showed her great favour and enhanced love. He who loved all mankind could not fail to love one who had given birth to a most lovely son to him in his old age.

But this very fact made his other wives jealous of her. None of them had any children by him. He distributed considerable sums of money in charity at Ibráhim's birth and took great pains in appointing a nurse for him and in supplying his mother with milk and other necessaries. He used to visit her house every day and stay there a long time nursing the child and looking after Mária. All this led to a serious trouble between Muḥammad and his other wives who were now thoroughly jealous of Mária and who, somewhat foolishly, tried to

revenge themselves on the Prophet for his supposed partiality to Mária.

This incident (if it had happened in the life of any ordinary individual would have been unnoticed) has been given great prominence by biographers and one is, therefore, compelled to notice it, the more so as it is referred in the Qur-án, Chapter 66 called Al-Taḥrīm or The Prohibition, verses 1 to 5.

But the matter relates to the 9th year of the Hegira and it will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XX

THE 9TH, 10TH AND 11TH YEARS OF HEGIRA

630, 631 AND 632 A.C.

MUHAMMAD'S WIVES BECOME JEALOUS OF MARIA

MUHAMMAD'S love for Ibráhim, his new-born son, grew day by day but so did the jealousy of his wives, who were all without a child, towards Mária—Ibráhim's mother. Muḥammad used to carry Ibráhim to the house of 'Áisha and his other wives and show them how like himself the child was. He was so devoted to the child and so absorbed in his new love that he, being innocent of all sin and evil suspicions, did not think that his fondness for the child and the child's mother would cause any ill-feeling to his other wives. But it did. And they began to show it.

Says 'Omar bin Khaṭṭáb: "In the time of Ignorance we never cared for our women till God sent down what He sent down as to their rights and responsibilities. One day, my wife and myself were talking together when my wife said to me: 'Why did you do this and that?' I said to her: 'What business have you to question me as to what I wish and what I do?' She said: 'You are wonderful, O son of Khaṭṭáb! You do not like to be questioned whilst your own daughter (meaning Ḥafṣa) is questioning the Prophet.'" Says 'Omar: "I took my mantle and

went to see Ḥafṣa and said to her: 'O my daughter! do you quarrel with the Prophet?' Ḥafṣa replied: 'Yes, I do.' I said to her: 'I fear for you the vengeance of God and the wrath of His messenger. O my daughter, don't presume too much.' Then I went to my relative Umm-Salama (another wife of the Prophet) and spoke to her in the same way. She said: 'O son of Khaṭṭáb! you are really wonderful, you want to interfere in every thing, even between the Prophet and his wives.' I was ashamed and left her."

The fact was that Muḥammad's having spent extra money on Mária had made his other wives combine together and make demands on him for more money than they had. Muḥammad could not meet their demands and shut himself in and would speak to no one, either male or female. 'Omar and Abu-Bakr made their daughters agree to make no further demands on Muḥammad and the matter was partially settled.

But human nature is a thing which God alone can control and it is especially so, when the exhibition of this human nature is the jealousy of a wife against her husband for loving a rival wife.

The wives began to tease him saying that he was smelling *Maghafir* (the exudations of small shrub called *rimth*) when he had really taken honey. The Prophet hated bad breath and this made-up story of his wives displeased him, so he took an oath that he would neither take honey nor see his wives for a whole month. He left them severely alone. He could not waste his time in these family squabbles. During this month, he allowed himself no soft bed, no good food and

no earthly comforts. He would say his prayers and retire to a naked bed till his skin was marked with the impressions of the rough material on which he slept.

The Muslims thought that he had divorced his wives but he had not done so. He was merely giving them time to think matters over and to allow their jealousies to cool down. And Muḥammad would allow no one to speak to him on the subject of his wives. The Muslims were as much disturbed as if Medīna had been invaded by the Romans and 'Omar with the greatest difficulty got information from the Prophet that he had not divorced his wives. 'Omar returned to the mosque and gave this news to the Muslims who were waiting for it.

Soon afterwards God sent down the following revelation :

> O Prophet! why dost thou prohibit (thyself) that which God has made lawful to thee, seeking to satisfy thy wives? (Qur-án, 66 : 1.)

This refers to the prohibition of honey which the Prophet had imposed upon himself because three of his wives said it smelt of *Maghafir*. The Prophet had been taking honey with his wife Zainab or Mária and this plot was concocted by 'Áisha and Ḥafṣa to prevent him from going to the houses of Zainab and Mária and taking honey with them. The allegation that he smelt of *Maghafir* was a mere fib.

> God has indeed made a provision for the expiation of your oaths;
> And God is your Protector... (Qur-án, 66 : 2.)

This refers to the Prophet's oath to avoid his wives for one month. The provision for the expiation of oaths

is mentioned in the Qur-án (5 : 89) and consists of feeding ten poor persons or supplying them with clothing or freeing a captive. Muḥammad, however, kept his oath and avoided his wives for full one month.

> And when the prophet spoke something in secret to one of his wives,
>
> Then when she informed (others) about it and God expressed (made it known) it to him, he told her part and kept back part thereof.
>
> Then when he informed her about it she said : " Who has informed thee of this ? " He said : " He has informed me (Who is) all-Wise, all-Aware."
>
> (Qur-án, 66 : 3.)

What was this secret talk about, no one knows. It was only known to the parties concerned and to God. The guesses of commentators are not to be believed as gospel truth. But the wife whom the matter was spoken to is said to be Ḥafṣa and it is surmised that it was something relating to another wife of the Prophet. Ḥafṣa was told to keep the secret to herself. But she divulged it to 'Áisha and caused trouble between the Prophet and his wives. One of the commentators' guesses is that one day whilst Ḥafṣa was absent from her house, Mária visited the Prophet in that house and remained there for some time. Meanwhile Ḥafṣa returned and had to wait till Mária left the Prophet. This made Ḥafṣa angry and she extorted a promise from the Prophet that he would not favour Mária for a certain period or some such equivalent to pacify her wounded feelings. The Prophet made her promise that she should not speak of the matter to others but Ḥafṣa could not keep the secret and boasted

of her success to 'Áisha and hence this revelation.

> If ye two females turn towards God (it would be well), because your hearts have already turned ;
>
> But if ye two back each other up against him then surely He, God, is his Protector, and Gabriel and the pious (amongst) the faithful and after that the messenger-spirits are his helpers. (Qur-án, 66 : 4.)

The "two females" are Ḥafṣa and 'Áisha, the chief plotters in this matter. This was now nearly the end of the month of the separation of the Prophet from his wives and the two of them spoken of here were finding their fathers and relations backing up the Prophet. Their hearts had already repented of their audacity and God is making their repentance easy but on condition of no further annoyance. The next verse states that Muḥammad may divorce them and marry other women. But they needed no further exhortations and made their peace. All is well that ends well. And it was so between the Prophet and his wives. It is a pity that the Prophet's enemies will rake up these family matters and pour the poison of their souls into matters which do not concern them at all. It was purely a matter between Muḥammad and his wives and outsiders had no right to interfere. Muḥammad instead of entering into any discussions adopted the wise course of withdrawing himself from the company of his wives till they found out their mistake. And, as one writer points out, Muḥammad was the messenger of God but his wives were not inspired by God. They were subject to the same feelings as other women usually are and their faults, if any, should not be put on the shoulders of the Prophet of God. Those who

unnecessarily say anything against them also are guilty of most unchivalrous and sinful conduct for which they are responsible to their Creator. It shows an utter lack of sense and depravity of mind when the enemies of Muḥammad have to dig up his most sacred and private affairs to satisfy the evil cravings of their own souls.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK: 9 A.H.(630 A.C.)

THOUGH Muḥammad had conquered the Arabs, he and his intimate companions knew that far greater danger to Islám was coming from the North. The Expedition of Mūta under Zaid bin Ḥárith in which Khálid bin Walīd so skilfully acquitted himself had not been forgotten.

Zakát or Alms and Taxes

BUT before Muḥammad could undertake any expeditions to the North, he required money to organize his army and to feed it. He, therefore, ordered the collection of Zakát or the prescribed alms: from Muslims and also a tenth part of the produce from those allied to him without any other interference with their property.

Banu Tamīm and Banu Muṣṭaliq objected to these impositions and were going to fight Muḥammad but finally yielded to his commands.

Whilst Muḥammad was engaged in this tax collection and had hardly finished pacifying his wives, rumours spread that the Romans were going to invade Arabia with huge armies. Syria was far away for getting information quickly and Muḥammad could not risk waiting and seeing his country invaded. It was the summer of 630 A.C. The crops were not promising and the last crop

had been an utter failure. People hardly had anything to eat. The rumours of the Roman invasion became more and more persistent.

Muḥammad sent his emissaries to all his followers and allies to prepare to meet this Roman invasion and to join him at Medīna.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A JOURNEY TO SYRIA IN SUMMER OF A FAMINE YEAR

BUT how could a big army go to Syria in such a summer and in such a year as this ? Muḥammad must carry his water and his provisions with him in addition to his soldiers and his arms. The thing was apparently a most difficult affair. The Muslims asked no questions. They only knew one answer to the command of the Prophet of God " We hear and obey ".

Abu-Bakr brought all his property and offered it to the Prophet. 'Omar gave half of his ; 'Othmán gave ten thousand camels with provisions for ten thousand soldiers and the camels. The rest of the Muslims brought whatever they could. Even the poorest amongst the Muslims contributed their share.

THE HYPOCRITES DISCOURAGE THE MUSLIMS FROM GOING TO SYRIA

TRIALS and tests like these easily distinguish the sincere from the insincere. When it came to the turn of the hypocrites they said : " Set ye not forth in this heat."

To which God replied:

"The fire of hell is stronger in heat." (Qur-án, 9 : 81.)

And some of the Beduins came making excuses in order
that permission might be given to them to stay away,
And those who had lied to God and His messenger sat
behind. (Qur-án, 9 : 90.)

From verse 73 to the end of Chapter 9 the Qurán deals with this expedition and its various aspects and morals. Muḥammad is warned not to listen to the excuses of these stay-behinds. Only three of them were pardoned on their repentance. The rest of them who were all hypocrites were thus clearly differentiated from the Muslims and were ostracised.

MUHAMMAD'S PRECAUTIONS FOR THE SAFETY OF MEDINA

THE army collected outside Medīna whilst Muḥammad made arrangements for the government of Medīna during his absence. He appointed Muḥammad bin Maslama as governor of the town and 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib to look after the families of the Muslims and their properties especially those belonging to Muḥammad and his near relations. During this interval Abu-Bakr was leading the prayers outside Medīna and virtually acting as the Prophet's deputy.

Muḥammad came out of Medīna and took upon himself the leadership of the army. 'Abdullah bin Ubbayy desired to go with Muḥammad but Muḥammad having had experience of his vicious propensities left him at Medīna.

THE BIGGEST ARMY EVER SEEN IN ARABIA

THE women of Medīna climbed their house-tops to witness this unforgettable scene of Muḥammad at the

head of 10,000 horsemen and 20,000 other soldiers on foot and camel-back. Those who were afraid of the heat stayed behind.

The army moved on in burning heat but with hearts bent on the service of God. They reached the district known as Ḥijr, the country of Thamūd to whom Ṣaleḥ had come as a prophet and had been rejected by them.

The army of Muḥammad wanted to get down at the well of Ḥijr but the Prophet forbade either drinking the water thereof or making ablution therewith. The Muslims obeyed his commands and went on suffering from fearful thirst. Soon after, God sent them rain from above. The Muslims came to Muḥammad and said it was a miracle. "No," said he, "it is a cloud which rains water."

The Muslim army reaches Tabūk and the Romans retire to Syria

THE Muslims were now refreshed and reached Tabūk not very far from the Syrian border. The Romans had their spies all over the country and had been informed of Muḥammad's preparations for war and knew that he had come to meet them and retrieve the loss of the Muslims at Mūta. They quickly retired behind their own frontiers. Muḥammad who had come to defend Arabia and not to invade Syria did not pursue them. But he scoured the country all round, prepared to fight or make peace whichever was necessary.

One of the chiefs on this frontier was Yuḥanná (John) bin Ruya of 'Aila. He came and submitted and agreed to pay *Jizia* (tax *in lieu* of war services) and

Muḥammad gave him a treaty of Peace as follows :—

"In the Name of God (Alláh), the most Merciful and Compassionate (Arraḥmán Arraḥīm).

"This is the charter of Security from God and Muḥammad, Prophet and messenger of God, given to Yuḥanná bin Ruya and the people of 'Aila. Their boats and conveyances on land and sea are in the protection of God and Muḥammad, Prophet of God, and of those who are with them of the inhabitants of Syria, Yemen and the people of the sea. And if anything happens to any of them it would be permissible for Muḥammad to help them against other people and it is not permissible to anyone to prevent them from any watering-place they come to or any road they may wish to cross whether on land or sea."

Muḥammad presented Yuḥanná with his own mantle. Yuḥanná had also brought him presents in gold and other tokens of his submission. Several other tribes of Christians such as Jirba and Adhraḥ also made their submission. Khálid bin Walīd under the Prophet's command went to Ukaidar bin Abd ul-Malak Alkindi, ruler of Dumat al-Jandal, with 500 horsemen. Khálid arrested him and his brother Hassán who were hunting wild cows and brought them to Medīna.

They surrendered to Muḥammad and were released as Muḥammad's allies. But Khálid had already brought with him 2,000 camels, 800 sheep, 400 bags of provision and 400 pieces of armour as security of their good behaviour.

Muḥammad had stayed 20 days at Tabūk and had

reached Medīna before Khálid. When the hyprocrites saw him come back empty-handed they said: "Was it for this that Muḥammad made his followers suffer such hardships, spend so much money and stay 20 days at Tabūk? What has he gained thereby? Nothing but two paltry treaties." They made fun of him and tried to make him look ridiculous in the eyes of his followers not knowing that the more they did this the stronger became the faith of the Muslims and the greater their contempt for the hypocrites. Whilst all this talk of the hypocrites was going on, Khálid came with his prisoners and his booty. The hypocrites quickly turned round to make friends with the Muslims but God would have nothing to do with them. They were moral lepers unless they repented and purged their souls.

Only three persons, namely, Ka'b bin Málik, Murára bin Rabī' and Halál bin Ommaya were excused by God's order. They had repented and cried so much to be taken back into the fold of Islám that they nearly died of grief. God says with regard to them and the other helpers of Muḥammad in this year of Famine ('Usra):

> God has most certainly turned towards
> The Prophet and those who left their homes,
> And the helpers who followed him in the hour of distress,
> After the hearts of a party of them were nigh turning away;
> Then He turned towards them.
> For He is towards them Loving, Merciful.
> And also towards the three persons who were left behind;

So much so that the earth, in spite of its expanse, became strait to them,
And their own souls became strait to them,
And they knew that there was no refuge from God except towards Himself.
Then He turned towards them that they might turn (towards Him),
Surely it is God who is the oft-Returning, most Merciful. (Qur-án, 9 : 117-118.)

MUHAMMAD EXPOSES THE HYPOCRITES. DEATH OF IBN-UBBAYY, THEIR LEADER

THE hypocrites had become a regular thorn in the side of Muḥammad. Before he left for Tabūk, the hypocrites had built a mosque of their own in which they used to assemble and hold secret meetings against Muḥammad and Islám. They desired Muḥammad to perform the opening ceremony of this mosque and to say prayers therein. Muḥammad put them off for a time. But God had informed him of their secret intentions and Chapters 9 and 10 of the Qur-án are full of references to the doings, sayings and thinkings of these morally diseased members of the commonwealth of Medīna. With regard to this particular mosque says God:

And there are those who have put up a mosque in order to produce hurt and disbelief and dissension between the faithful,
And as an ambush for those who have warred against God and His messenger before.
And they will surely swear saying:

"We intended only good,"
And God bears witness that they are certainly liars.
On no account do thou stand therein...

(Qur-án, 9 : 107-108.)

Muḥammad had the mosque burnt so that it might not be used against God's Word to the hurt of Islám. The hypocrites were now thoroughly cowed down and soon afterwards their leader Ibn-Ubbayy died and there was an end to this party of annoyance to the Muslims.

DEATH OF MUHAMMAD'S SON IBRAHIM

TABUK was the last of the Prophet's military expeditions and he was now free to devote himself entirely to the propagation of Islám. But God had ordained that in his family affairs he should meet with sorrow after sorrow. It was the severest trial for Muḥammad. Sorrow (for the death of his dear ones) was his constant Companion. Here is a list of his bereavements to remind the reader.

(1) Death of his father before his birth.
(2) Death of his mother in the desert when he was in his sixth year and had only been with her a few months.
(3) Death of Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, his guardian, when he was in his 8th year.
(4) Death of Khadījah and Abu-Ṭálib in the year called "The Year of Sorrow" when the Meccans were after his life and he hardly had a place to take shelter.
(5) Death of his three daughters, Umm-Kulthūm, Ruqayya and Zainab at Medīna, the last under the most tragic circumstances.

(6) Death of his first infant son Qásim, and now,

(7) His most beloved son Ibráhim who was growing up to be a wonderfully good looking boy, fell ill whilst 16 months old and was carried away by the Will of God.

The story of Muḥammad's care for the boy, his nursing him and his doing his best to save his life is a most pathetic one. Although his patience was great, grief and sorrow were also natural. And Muḥammad who was so tender-hearted could not but feel what was coming to him. He was now 61 years of age.

He went to see Ibráhim, leaning on the arm of Abd ur-Raḥmán bin 'Auf, till he came to the shadow of the tree next to the house called 'Aliya where the child was being looked after this day.

Ibráhim was in the lap of his mother in the agony of death. Muḥammad took him most gently in his own lap, his heart palpitating violently and his hands shaking. Grief overpowered his soul, his face changed colour and became deadly pale as if he himself was in the throes of death. He said, "O Ibráhim! we can avail thee naught against God." Then he could speak no more on account of what was passing in his mind. He became rigidly silent. His eyes filled with tears. Ibráhim breathed his last. His mother and aunt cried the natural cry of bereaved souls.

At last Muḥammad recovered himself and said, "O Ibráhim, were it not that God's Commands are the Truth and His Promises are to be fulfilled and the last of us is to join the first, we would mourn thee even

more than this." And then after a time he said:

"Our eyes are filled with tears, our hearts with grief but we say nothing with our mouths except that which pleases God, and we mourn thee O Ibráhim!"

> Surely to God we belong and unto God is our Return.
> (Qur-án, 2 : 156.)

People were wondering why Muḥammad was so full of grief when he said:

"I have not forbidden you grief but the raising of your voice in lamentation. You cannot prevent the heart from feeling the effects of love and mercy and he who does not show love and mercy to others will not be shown love and mercy to himself."

ECLIPSE OF THE SUN ON THE DAY OF THE DEATH OF IBRAHIM

THE sun was eclipsed on the day of the death of Muḥammad's son and people regarded it as a miracle from God that heaven and earth were mourning the death of Ibráhim. But Muḥammad said to them:

"The sun and the moon are two signs out of God's signs. They are not eclipsed because of the death or birth of any human being. When you see these eclipses hasten to the remembrance of God in prayers." And he carried out what he preached that day.

The expedition of Tabūk made the deepest impression on the minds of Arabs. If Muḥammad was daring enough, to challenge the great Roman Empire, and the Romans were afraid to accept that challenge, who else could stand up against him? Therefore whatever doubt

was left in their minds as to the truth of Islám and the power of Muḥammad was now removed and they began to embrace Islám of their own free choice. But more of this in the next chapter.

MUHAMMAD APPOINTS ABU-BAKR AS HIS DEPUTY TO LEAD THE HAJJ

END OF 9TH YEAR OF HEGIRA—JAN.-FEB., 631

SINCE Muḥammad had left Mecca he had not as yet performed the greater Ḥajj or Pilgrimage. Up till now, the Ḥajj had been performed by Arabs (excepting Muslims) according to the old pagan rites.

Muḥammad sent Abu-Bakr with three hundred Muslims to teach people the new way of Ḥajj. Soon after Abu-Bakr left, the Prophet received revelation from God prohibiting pagans to enter the mosque at Mecca. The new reforms were of such a far-reaching character that Muḥammad sent 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib to join Abu Bakr and make the new Proclamation to all concerned as detailed in Chapter 9, verses 1 to 37.

These verses are a proclamation of Muḥammad's Independence of all earthly powers and God's declaration, against all pagans, of the Freedom of Mecca and Ḥajj from all impurities, obscenities and idol-worship of all kinds. Four months were allowed to all pagans who were not allied to Muḥammad in which they were to move about. If during that time any pagan wanted instruction and help he was to be instructed and helped and safely conveyed to his home. The covenants of those pagans who had already made covenants with

Muḥammad were to be strictly observed up to the end of their terms. After these four months or the expiry of the terms of agreements, the control of the Ka'ba and the management of the pilgrimage was to be solely in the hands of the Muslims. The pagans were spiritually filthy and as such had no right of entry left to the Holy House of God which now by right of Conquest belonged to God and His messenger. If the pagans joined Islám, performed their prayers and paid the Zakát they were to be on equal terms with the Muslims:

> But if they turn to (God)
> And keep up the prayer,
> And pay the stated alms
> Then they are your brethren in faith...
>
> (Qur-án, 9 : 11.)

But if they remain pagans then:

> O ye who believe!
> The pagans are altogether filthy,
> Then let them not approach the holy mosque after this year of theirs...
>
> (Qur-án, 9 : 28.)

'Alī and Abu-Huraira stood by the side of Abu-Bakr, Muḥammad's Deputy at Ḥajj, and 'Alī read out the first 37 verses of Chapter 9 to inform all Arabs as to God's orders regarding them, the Muslims, the Ka'ba and the pilgrimage.

From this day a new era dawned on Arabia and in fact this Ḥajj is the most important event in the History of Islám—the end of the 9th year of Hegira, February 631 A.C.

And the next year, 1st Muḥarram 10 A.H. is the date from which Muḥammad and Muslims were, under

God, their own masters. Up till this day they had been struggling to free themselves from the shackles of idol-worshippers. Now was the time for them to show what Islám as an independent religion under God's guidance could do.

When 'Alī had finished the reading of the Qur-án at Miná he said to all present:

"O ye men! no unbeliever will enter heaven and no pagan will join pilgrimage after this year nor anyone will perform the Ṭwáf in a naked state, and whoever has any treaty with Muḥammad will have it to the date mentioned therein."

'Alī not only read this chapter at Miná but at Ama'án and many other places wherever there was a congregation of men. By this time the people of Ṭá'if, Ḥijáz, Tiháma, Nejd and many other places had declared their faith in Islám. Those who had not as yet joined the fold of Islám were impressed by its truth and hastened to join the Muslims.

Abu-Bakr, 'Alī, Abu-Huraira and the 300 companions of Abu-Bakr returned to Medīna with many others. From this day Medīna was not only *Medīnatun-Nabi* (the City of the Prophet) but was also the Capital of Islám. And deputations poured into Medīna from all the four corners of Arabia. Deputations came from the following tribes and places:

(1) Muzaina, (2) Asad, (3) Tamīm, (4) 'Abs, (5) Fazára, (6) Murra, (7) Tha'laba, (8) Muḥárab, (9) Sa'd bin Bakr, (10) Kiláb, (11) Ruwás bin Kiláb, (12) 'Uqail bin Ka'b, (13) Ja'da, (14) Qushair bin Ka'b,

(15) Bani al-Bakká, (16) Kinana, (17) Ashja', (18) Bahila, (19) Sulaim, (20) Hilál bin 'Ámir, (21) 'Ámir bin Ṣa'ṣa', (22) Thaqīf, (23) 'Abd ul-Qais, (24) Bakr bin Wái'l, (25) Taghlib, (26) Ḥanīfa, (27) Shaibán; and from Yemen, (28) Ṭayy', (29) Tujīb, (30) Khaulán, (31) Ju'fi, (32) Ṣudá', (33) Murád, (34) Zubaid, (35) Kinda, (36) Ṣaddif, (37) Khushain and Sa'd of Hudhaim, (38) Azd, (39) Ghassán, (40) Ḥárith bin Ka'b, (41) Hamdán, (42) Sa'd al-'Ashīra, (43) 'Ans, (44) Dáriyyīn, (45) Rahawīyyīn Ḥayy from Madhḥij, (46) Ghámid, (47) Nakha', (48) Baḥīla, (49) Khasha'm, (50) 'Asha'rīn, (51) Haḍr-Maut, (52) Azd 'Umán, (53) Gháfiq, (54) Báriq, (55) Daus, (56) Thmála, (57) Ḥuddán, (58) Aslam, (59) Judhám, (60) Mahra, (61) Ḥamīr, (62) Najrán, (63) Jaishán, and in fact from every part of Arabia.

The people flocked together vying with one another in learning the new faith and in casting off the worship of idols, images, and empty names. And all this was the result of the conquest of Mecca and of the Expedition of Tabūk. No compulsion, urging or force was used on the part of Muḥammad. The Arabs united themselves in one block under the Banner of Islám and the Guidance of Muḥammad.

Thus one of the wildest and most undisciplined and backward races of mankind was cemented together by the Love of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Those who accuse Muḥammad of having been an aggressive warrior, a looter of caravans and a man of lust and licentiousness, have to consider the facts as described in this book and other reliable biographies of Muḥammad and to study the Qur-án to find out their mistake.

Muḥammad's public and private life was so exposed to the views of his friends and enemies that if he had been anything like what his enemies paint him to be in their own hearts, he could never have succeeded as he did.

Muḥammad's followers gave their lives and their properties for his sake. They did so because they believed in him absolutely. And they believed in him because they knew him to be truthful. When 'Áisha and Ḥafṣa quarrelled with Muḥammad, their fathers Abu-Bakr and 'Omar were ready to strangle their daughters simply because they asked more than he could give. Both at Oḥod and Ḥunain people gave their own lives to save his. And the proof of Muḥammad's mission lies in the fact that all his promises and all his prophecies were fulfilled to the letter in spite of the fact that they were made under the most adverse conditions. *La-iláha ill-Allah.*

CHAPTER XXI

THE YEAR OF DEPUTATIONS

THE Tenth year of Hegira is generally called the year of Deputations. But, as a matter of fact, deputations came even at the end of the Eighth year and continued to the Tenth.

A separate book is necessary to give full details of all the deputations. Here, a summary of the most important deputations alone will be attempted but it will be enough to give the reader an idea of what actually happened. These deputations were the natural results of Muḥammad's invitations to the chiefs of Arabia and the rulers of the world. They were also hastened by the Conquest of Mecca, the Battle of Ḥunain and the Expedition to Tabūk.

(1) CONVERSION AND MARTYRDOM OF URWA BIN MAS'UD AND A DEPUTATION FROM BANU THAQIF

THE reader will remember that Muḥammad had besieged Ṭá'if but not succeeded in capturing it.

By a curious concatenation of circumstances the people of Ṭá'if, the most deadly enemies of Muḥammad, were the first to send him a deputation of peace. It happened this way.

'Urwa bin Mas'ūd was one of the chiefs of Thaqīf. When Muḥammad laid the siege of Ṭá'if he was in Yemen. When he returned to Ṭá'if and learnt that

Muḥammad had successfully returned from Tabūk he presented himself at Medīna and became a Muslim.

He not only became a Muslim but wished to preach Islám to his tribe. He knew the difficulties in his way but persisted in his mission. The Prophet examined him most minutely and found him to be earnest in trying to bring his people into the fold of Islám. The Prophet had personal knowledge of the bitterness of Thaqīf against Islám and their love of their deity Al-Lát. Muḥammad told 'Urwa that Banu Thaqīf would kill him if he preached Islám to them. 'Urwa replied, " I am better loved by them than their own eyes".

'Urwa went and preached Islám to Banu Thaqīf. They consulted together but could not come to a decision. On the morrow, 'Urwa climbed up a high place and gave the "Call to Prayer". The people could control themselves no longer. They surrounded him and pierced him with arrows till he was mortally wounded and the Prophet's warning came true.

'Urwa's people surrounded him whilst he was near dying. He said: " This is an honour with which God has honoured me and a martyrdom which God has made me to taste from Himself. My case is like those of Muḥammad's martyrs who were killed here before his departure and at his request he was buried with them.

THE EFFECT OF 'URWA'S DEATH

The Deputation of Ṭá'if

But 'Urwa's blood was not shed in vain. The tribes round about Ṭá'if went to Muḥammad and declared

themselves Muslims. The conscience of the people of Ṭá'if was also pricked and their guilt sat most heavily on them. They had killed one of their own innocent chiefs without any rhyme or reason and vengeance must follow and nothing could possibly save them against Muḥammad whom even the Romans were afraid of fighting. The people turned to their leader 'Abd Yálīl, one of the three brothers who had scorned Muḥammad when he went to preach Islám there about the Tenth year of his mission and who had set the rabble of the town against him. 'Abd Yálīl refused to undertake the work of the deputation unless they sent five others with him so that he might be safe on his return. He got a representative of each family.

When they were near Medīna Mughīra bin Shu'ba met them, and Abu-Bakr took the glad news to the Prophet of God.

The deputation were afraid of being injured by the Muslims on account of Banu Thaqīf having previously maltreated the Prophet and killed 'Urwa, so that a special tent was pitched for them in which they put up where they were quite safe. Khálid bin Sa'īd bin 'Áṣ undertook to act as a negotiator between them and Muḥammad.

The deputation were so cautious that they would not eat anything brought to them unless Khálid ate first. They were offered safety and brotherhood under the Banner of Islám. The deputation desired that their deity Al-Lát should not be touched by Muslims for three years. But the Holy Prophet would not concede this

even for a single day as no compromise could be arrived at between Faith and idol-worship. There was no midway house between believing in God and the Future Day and not believing in it. God and gods was an impossible combination in Islám. When the deputation despaired of that, they asked to be relieved of prayer (remembering how 'Urwa had been killed on account of his "Call to Prayer"). But Muḥammad said, "There is no virtue in Faith without Prayer."

At last they asked that they be allowed to break the idols with their own hands. Muḥammad agreed to that. He was always a reasonable man. The Prophet of God gave them safe conduct and appointed 'Othmán bin Abu 'Áṣ as their teacher. The deputation stayed the month of Ramaḍán at Medīna and were the guests of Muḥammad.

Muḥammad instructed 'Othmán bin Abu-'Áṣ: "Shorten your prayers and measure their length according to the strength of the weakest amongst men, because there are those amongst them who are old or too young, weak or in haste."

The deputation returned home. Muḥammad sent Abu-Sufyán bin Ḥarb and Mughīra bin Shu'ba with them. Both were old friends of Banu Thaqīf. Abu-Sufyán and Mughīra destroyed the idols whilst the women wept but no one could say anything as their own deputation had agreed to the conditions. The ornaments of the idols were used in paying the debts of 'Urwa and Aswad.

By the submission of Banu Thaqīf, the whole of

Hijaz was now under Muḥammad's command. Before Abu-Bakr started on his Pilgrimage, already described in the last chapter, other deputations had gone to Medīna and that was one reason why it was necessary for the Prophet to remain there to instruct people in the Faith of Islám, the work for which he was especially appointed by God.

(2) DEPUTATION OF MAZINA : 5 A.H.

MAZINA were a very big tribe. They were the first to send a deputation of 400 persons to Medīna in 4 A.H. and to acknowledge their Faith. Nu'mán, the conqueror of Iṣfahán, belonged to this tribe.

(3) DEPUTATION OF BANU TAMIM

THE story of this Deputation will show the importance of the Arabic language in the minds of the Arabs as has been pointed out more than once in this book.

Banu Tamīm came to Medīna accompanied by their leaders with a great show of pride. 'Uyaina bin Ḥiṣn, the raider on Medīna camels, was with them. The members of the deputation called out to Muḥammad in a loud voice to come out of his house and have a competition with them in verbal contests. 'Aṭárad bin Ḥájib, their orator, spoke first and said :

" We thank God, by whose favour we are possessors of crowns and thrones, owners of precious treasures, and the most honourable amongst the Eastern (East of Arabia ?) communities. Who can rival us to-day? If there be any claimant let him count such merits and such qualities as we have counted for ourselves."

The Prophet asked Thábit bin Qais to reply. He said:

"Praise be to God Who made the heavens and the earth. *He* gave us the kingdom. *He* elected the best of mankind, the noblest in birth, truthful of speech, excellent of manners and the chosen one of the world. For that reason God granted him the Book. He invited mankind to Islám. The Muhájirs first and then we the Anṣár responded to his call. We are the helpers of God and the ministers of His Embassy."

Then Banu Tamīm's poet came forward and read a poem two lines of which may be quoted:

> We are the most honourable amongst the nobles
> And there is not a tribe to rival our greatness,
> Kings are born from our seed
> And we be the founders of churches.

The Prophet asked Ḥassán to reply, who said:

> The nobles of Fihr (Quraish)
> And their brethren
> Have shown the world a path
> Which all men do tread.

After this verbal contest the tribe declared their faith.

The sting of Ḥassán's couplet lies in the fact that even Banu Tamīm are forced to come to Medīna to follow Muḥammad. If they had really been great they would not be treading the path set for them by Muḥammad who is a descendant of Fihr or Quraish. The Quraish are, therefore, superior to Banu Tamīm.

Similarly, the speech of Thábit bin Qais points out that whilst the great men of Banu Tamīm are in

possession of merely earthly crowns, Muḥammad has been favoured by God with His Revelation. Muḥammad's speaker and poet, therefore, won in the contest.

(4) THE DEPUTATION OF ASHA'RIYYIN : 7 A.H.

ASHA'RIYYIN were a noble tribe of Yemen. Abu-Mūsa Asha'ri was one of the leaders of this tribe. He, with 53 other men, tried to reach Medīna in 7 A.H. by the sea as the Quraish (who were still opposed to Muḥammad) barred their way. The winds carried them away to Abyssinia where they joined Ja'far bin Abu-Ṭālib. From there they accompanied Ja'far to Medīna and became Muslims. They were some of the most enthusiastic amongst the converts.

(5) THE DEPUTATION OF DAUS

IT has already been stated that Ṭufail bin 'Amr a chief of this tribe came to Mecca in Seventh year of the mission of Muḥammad (or earlier) and became a Muslim. He preached Islám and converted his people. In 7 A.H. 80 families of this tribe including the famous Abu-Ḥuraira (the great traditionist) migrated to Medīna.

(6) THE DEPUTATION OF BIN KA'B : 9 A.H.

BANU-HARITH BIN KA'B were the people of Najrán. They were famous for their victories over the Arabs. The Prophet sent Khálid to preach Islám to them and afterwards their chiefs came to Medīna with a number of their people. The Prophet asked them the secret of their success. They replied : " We fought united and we

did not oppress anyone". The Prophet appointed Qais bin Ḥiṣn to be their leader.

(7) THE DEPUTATION OF TAYY AND 'ADI : 9 A.H.

'ADI was the son of Ḥátim Ṭayy (the famous philanthropist). He was a Christian and a leader of his tribe and when Muḥammad sent his soldiers to Yemen 'Adi ran away to Syria. His sister was brought to Medīna as a captive. The Prophet not only released her but gave her valuable presents and sent her back to her people with great honour. She met her brother and praised Muḥammad to him. 'Adi and other members of his tribe including one Zaid ul-Khail came to Medīna in 9 A.H. and professed Islam. (Zaid ul-Khail means Zaid of the Horses. The Prophet changed his name to "Zaid ul-Khair", "Zaid of Virtues".)

(8) THE DEPUTATION FROM NAJRAN : 9 A.H.

NAJRAN is situated between Mecca and Yemen and is a vast open territory and was inhabited by Christians in the time of Muḥammad. The Christians had a big church there which they considered as their Ka'ba. When the Prophet sent them his invitation to become Muslims, they sent their priests and leaders, 60 in number to Medīna. The Prophet accommodated them in his Mosque and allowed them to pray therein according to their own ritual. They had a bishop named Abu-Ḥaritha. He was an able and learned man and friendly discussions took place between him and the Prophet. They questioned Muḥammad about Jesus and Islám and

Muḥammad's answer is contained in the verses which will be quoted below. As these Christians would not be convinced by reason, Muḥammad invited them to take the invocation called *Mubáhila* (as stated in verses to be quoted below). They, at first, agreed to do so but the next day when Muḥammad brought out his family, his daughter Faṭimah and her sons Ḥasan and Ḥusain to take the oath, the Christians backed out, and agreed to pay *Jizya*. They were honourably sent back to their country. The verses referred to are as follows :—

> Surely, the case of Jesus with God is like the case of Adam,
> He made (or makes in the case of every man) him out of the dust
> Then he said (or says) to him " Be " and he became (or becomes).
> The truth is from thy Lord,
> Hence be not of the disputers.
> But if anyone argues with thee in this matter
> After what has come to thee of knowledge,
> Then say: " Come, let us call our sons and your sons,
> And our wives and your wives,
> And our people and your people,
> Then let us pray in earnest,
> And call down the disapproval of God upon the liars.
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 58-60).

This last verse is the *Mubáhila* or the invocation of disapproval on the liar which the Christians refused to take. Muḥammad then invited them to what God says in two verses further, the famous invitation to all believers in God's Revelation.

Say: " O ye people of the Book !
Come to a saying,
The same for us and for you:—
That we serve none but God,
And that we join naught with Him
And that some of us take not others as lords besides God."
But if they turn back, then say (you Muslims !)
" Bear ye witness that we are Muslims."

(Qur-án, 3 : 63.)

(9) THE DEPUTATION OF BANU ASAD : 9 A.H.

BANU ASAD were the allies of the Quraish against Muḥammad. They now considered that their old enmity against Muḥammad was founded on falsehood and willingly sent a deputation to Medīna acknowledging their faith. They boasted of their having become Muslims but God said to them not to do that but to thank God that He had guided them (Qur-án 49 : 17).

(10) THE DEPUTATION OF BANU FAZARA : 9 A.H.

THIS deputation is famous for it was headed by ' Uyaina bin Ḥiṣn (already mentioned several times in this book) who had looted the camels of the Prophet and who had brought hundreds of men and 1000 camels against the Muslims in the Battle of the Confederates (5 A.H.)

(11) THE DEPUTATION OF KINDA : 10 A.H.

THE Kindites lived in Ḥaḍr-Maut, the southernmost province of Arabia. Their ruler Asha'th came with 80 horsemen to Medīna in 10 A.H. and they all became

Muslims. He was afterwards present in the Battles of Qádisiya and Yermūk and was also with Ḥaḍrat 'Alī in the Battle of Ṣafīn against Mu'áwiya.

(12) THE DEPUTATION OF ABD UL-QAIS FROM BAHRAIN : FROM 5 TO 10 A.H.

ISLAM had spread in Baḥrain quite early. In 5 A.H. or thereabouts, 13 men of Baḥrain under 'Abd ul-Qais came to Muḥammad and were converted. They were addicted to wine drinking and the vessels in which they used to drink were called Wubbá, Ḥantam, Naqīr and Mazaffat. The Prophet told them to worship one God only, to keep up the prayer, to fast and to pay the stated alms and to avoid Wubbá, Ḥantam, Naqīr and Mazaffat.

(13) THE WICKED CHIEF OF THE DEPUTATION OF BANU 'AMIR : 9 A.H.

BANU 'Ámir bin Ṣa'ṣa' had three chiefs, 'Ámir bin Ṭufail, Arbad bin Qais and Jabbár bin Salma. They came to Mecca with these three chiefs. 'Ámir had been concerned in several intrigues before, and he now again came to Medīna with evil intentions. He had conspired with Arbad, his companion, that whilst 'Ámir would engage the Prophet in flattering conversation Arbad should kill him (Muḥammad). 'Ámir stopped at Medīna as a guest of a woman of Sabūl family. According to his plan, he went and began talking to Muḥammad: "You are our Sayyid (lord)." Muḥmmad replied: "God is our Lord (Sayyid)". Then 'Ámir said: "You are the most graceful, the most generous, etc., amongst us".

Muḥammad (who had one eye on Arbad and another on 'Ámir) said: "You better talk sense, I fear your flattery will cause the devil to mislead you". Arbad forgot all about killing Muḥammad, so fascinated was he by Muḥammad's plain speaking. When 'Ámir found his guiles to be useless he cast off his disguise of flattery and said: "I will put three conditions before thee:

(1) You will rule the desert and I will be the master of cities.

(2) Or you will make me your successor.

(3) Or I will overrun you with my horsemen of Ghaṭafán.

With this threat he left with his companion Arbad. Muḥammad prayed, "O God save me from the evil of 'Ámir".

'Ámir died of plague on the way back to his place.

However, Jabbár, the third chief and the rest of the people, became Muslims.

(14) DEPUTATION FROM HAMIR

HAMIR was a province of Arabia consisting of petty states. They sent deputies asking for instructions in faith and acknowledging their submission to Muḥammad.

MUHAMMAD: RULER OF ARABIA BY THE UNIVERSAL CONSENT OF ITS PEOPLE

THERE has never been in the whole history of the world any one so universally accepted as the ruler of a country as Muḥammad was in these two years, the ninth and tenth of the Hegira. Appointed by God and accepted by the people, he had now supreme power

over the lives and fortunes of the Arabs. And yet this man lived in a house built of mud, with mats and skins of goats as his furniture, with clothes made of coarse camel-hair and with dates and dry oats as his meal. By day he would work hard for the good of his people and by night he would pray long in order to communicate with God. He was his own servant, he hated flattery whilst he himself was full of the spirit of *noblesse oblige*, and poverty was his pride. He feasted his guests, and himself he fasted. He was wearing himself out very quickly both physically and mentally. The strain of wars, the continuous care of his followers, the fear of God and the shocks of the death of his children were producing their effects on his constitution. But he had the satisfaction of seeing his mission accomplished and there remained nothing but the last touches of the Master Spirit to perfect the Faith of which he had been the Ambassador on this earth.

> God bears witness that there is no deity but He,
> And (so do) the messenger-spirits and those possessed of knowledge,
> He being the Maintainer of Justice:
> No deity but He,
> All-Mighty, all-Wise.
> *Decidedly the* (*only*) *religion with God is Al-Islám.*
>
> (Qur-án, 3 : 17-18.)

> And the word of thy Lord is the whole truth and justice,
> No one can change His word,
> And He is all-Hearing, all-Knowing.
>
> (Qur-án, 6 : 116.)

CHAPTER XXII

THE TENTH YEAR OF HEGIRA

February 632 to February 633

BY the tenth year of the Hegira nearly all the pagan Arabs had become Muslims and most of those who still remained Christians or Jews were under Muḥammad's protection. But all the people were not yet instructed in Islám. Muḥammad despatched teachers to all the provinces of Arabia. His instructions were: "Make people's tasks (especially in understanding the Faith) easy for them and do not make them hard. Give people glad news and do not frighten them away." And if people asked them for the key to Paradise they were to say:

"We bear witness that there is no deity but God (Allah). He is Alone without a partner."

KHALID'S MISSION TO NAJRAN
'ALI'S MISSION TO YEMEN

MOST of the Christians of Najrán had professed Islám but some still stood out. The Prophet sent Khálid bin Walīd to call them to Islám. Khálid like 'Omar was a man of resolution and he remained in Najrán till the people sent a deputation to Medīna. The Prophet received them with great honour and made friends with them.

Similarly, some of the people of Yemen were still pagans. The Prophet sent 'Alī to them with 300 horsemen but they fought him. 'Alī defeated them and finally they submitted and sent a deputation to the Prophet which met him at Medīna just before his death. 'Alī remained in Yeman till the 11th month of this year.

THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE: 10 A.H.
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 633 A.C.

THERE were no wars and no military expeditions after Tabūk. There was peace all over Arabia from one end of the country to the other. People were crowding into Medīna from all parts of Arabia and Muḥammad was extremely busy in teaching them Islám and in sending out instructors.

But he himself had not yet performed the greater Pilgrimage. He had performed 'Umra twice but it was his duty to lead the Muslims to Ḥajj so that they may know for all time to come how to perform the Ḥajj.

Muḥammad left nothing to chance or theory. Everything that he preached he carried out in practice, and God saw to it that he did not miss anything. It was for God to command and for Muḥammad to obey.

The Prophet sent messengers to all parts of Arabia asking them to join him in this greater Pilgrimage. In doing so he was doing nothing but carrying out the command given to Abraham nearly 2500 years before Muḥammad's birth.

> And proclaim amongst mankind the Pilgrimage,
> They will come to thee on foot and upon all kinds of lean camels coming from every remote land;
> In order that they may witness the places of benefit to them
> And that they may mention God's name, during the given number of days, upon what He has provided them of the four-footed cattle...
>
> (Qur-án, 22 : 27-28.)

Chapter 22 is called "The Pilgrimage" and verses 26 to 38 deal with Pilgrimage especially. It was thus, that the prayer of Abraham (Qur-án, 2 : 129) was being fulfilled to the letter. Muḥammad was reciting the Qur-án to the people, teaching them the real meaning thereof and interpreting its wisdom and purifying the souls of mankind. No greater task has ever been given to any man and no man has performed it so thoroughly as did Muḥammad.

The people responded to his call not in hundreds or thousands but in tens upon tens of thousand.

Tents were pitched outside Medīna in which gathered 100,000 to 114,000 Muslims from North and South; from East and West; from mountains and valleys; from deserts and towns. And now they knew what the Brotherhood of Islám and the fellow-feeling of Muslims did actually mean.

The people who were tearing each other to pieces and given to the grossest evils of fornication, drinking, gambling, adultery and savagery of all kinds were now acting as if they had but one soul. Every good reformer, king, statesman, ruler and preacher wishes men to live

at peace with one another, to do good to one another and to do unto others as they would like others do unto them. Muḥammad had not only preached that but accomplished that preaching by making his followers act up to his teaching. He forgave all his former tormentors —Abu-Sufyán, 'Abd Yálīl, 'Uyaina bin Ḥiṣn, and a hundred others. And in this Pilgrimage there were thousands upon thousands who had fought him as an enemy but they were now his friends and followers. Those who dislike Muḥammad or abuse him are much to be pitied, for they can do no good to themselves or mankind by their hatred of God's most virtuous man. Surely, the people to find out his faults, failings and shortcomings were the Arabs. For twenty years now they had been having a most vigorous fight against him and they had by hard experience found him to be nothing but praiseworthy. And they showed their appreciation of his virtues by their presence at Medīna in this tenth year of the Hegira. They had been re-generated or re-born as Hindu philosophers are never tired of saying about their most virtuous people.

THE MARCH OF 114,000 PILGRIMS

ONE hundred thousand men make a large crowd at any time, but at the time of Muḥammad it was especially a large one. The people carried all their belongings and foodstuffs with them. Muḥammad had all his wives with him in this journey, so that women might not remain ignorant of the manner of performing Ḥajj. Muḥammad was the most practical man who ever lived. But he was not a lover of ease. His practical good sense was

combined with the most painstaking attention to every detail of eyerything that he did. And it was so in this Ḥajj. He had taken 100 animals to sacrifice at Miná and he was going to carry out God's instructions with regard to Pilgrimage to the minutest detail.

When he reached Dhul-Ḥulaifa, he encamped and passed the night there. The next morning he and all his followers put on the pilgrim's garb (the Ihrám), one unsewn piece of cloth tied round the waist and another similar piece covering the upper part of the body, the head and arms remaining uncovered. In this garb all men stood before their Lord as equals. The king could not be distinguished from the beggar nor the nobleman from the labourer. Here was liberty, fraternity and equality carried out in practice and not merely preached as a theory in text-books.

With their bodies washed and clean, their hearts purified, and wearing the white garb of angels in human shape the Muslims followed their leader—nay, their brother-in-faith. And Muḥammad gave the signal call: *Labbaik*, *Labbaik*, etc. "Here I am at Thy service, here I am O God! I am here (and declare that) there is no partner with Thee, I am here at Thy service. All praise and thanks and blessings belong to Thee, I am here. I am here. Thou hast no partner O God! I am here at Thy service."

This is the most direct form of response to God's call of service. Man speaks to God direct and God speaks to mankind without any intermediary or intercessor. It makes man a freeman. The soul of man realises its greatness by standing in the presence of God

his only Lord and is emancipated from all evil thoughts.

As Muḥammad recited the formula and at each stop in his recitation he was followed by 100,000 voices in unison repeating what he said, the hills and deserts echoed their voice and the whole space was filled with it. What philosophers call the Crowd Psychology was changed into a sublime Spiritual Awakening. Only those can feel this awakening who have had experience of it. There is something in Ḥajj which raises even the meanest of men to nobility of thought and self-sacrificing devotion. Ḥajj is a symbol of sacrifice in which the soul of man sacrifices all comforts, luxuries and joys for the sake of the happiness of meeting the Universal Soul of God. It is like being drowned in the Sea of God's Love. And there are Muslims who after having performed pilgrimage for a score of times are not satisfied and wish to add to the number. It is the most fascinating journey for a Muslim. And yet we know that Christians and unbelievers who have performed the Ḥajj under the disguise of Muslims find no pleasure in it though they all admire the patience and perseverance of the Muslims. This fact shows clearly that the Muslims do not go to Ḥajj for pleasure as other people do to their fairs, for if that were so, the unbelievers who are often as well provided with funds (if not better) as the Muslims, would find pleasure therein also. But it cannot be. The writer has been on Pilgrimage twice and has seen these pretended Muslims performing their Ḥajj. Whilst the Muslims are absorbed body and soul in the remembrance of God, these hypocrites are busy in making their observations as to the height, length and breadth of the Ka'ba

and a thousand other details for insertions in their diaries, articles and books which details the Muslim notices seldom if ever. It is impossible for a hypocrite to enjoy Ḥajj. He is piling agony upon agony on his soul whilst he is doing the circuit of the Ka'ba. Truly has Sa'di said:

> If the ass of Jesus go to Hajj,
> Nothing but an ass shall him we judge.

Muḥammad's army of pilgrims were inspired by lofty ideals and when they reached a place called *Mahila* between Mecca and Medīna, Muḥammad told them that those who had no presents for Ḥajj should make it an 'Umra but those who had should not do so.

Muḥammad reached Mecca on the 4th of Dhul-Ḥijj, thus he took nearly 19 days on his journey as he started on the 15th of the previous month, a fact which shows that the journey was done either in short stages or with long stops or both, for generally it is accomplished in 12 days on camel back. But the large number of pilgrims must have made it necessarily a slow journey so as not to inconvenience the women, or the old and the weak. This fact also shows how careful Muḥammad was for the comfort of his followers. In large congregations he always made his prayers short, but when saying them alone at his own house he made them long. As soon as Muḥammad reached Mecca, he hastened to the Ka'ba, made seven circuits of the House of God, the first three as he had done three years before in 7 A.H. ('Umra) and the last four somewhat easy. Then he prayed at the station of Abraham. After which he went out to make seven runs between the hills of Ṣafa and Marwa.

By Muḥammad's command all those who had no presents to offer shaved their heads and were free from the restrictions of Iḥrám for the time being.

'Alī joined Muḥammad and persisted in keeping on his Iḥrám. He had, therefore, to join Muḥammad in his sacrifices as he had brought none of his own.

On the 8th of Dhul-Ḥijj Muḥammad left Mecca for Mina and passed the night there. After morning prayers, he rode his she-camel Qaṣwá and people followed him to 'Arafát on 9th Dhul-Ḥijj.

The Prophet's tent was pitched at Namira to the east of 'Arafát. Soon after mid-day, riding his camel, Qaṣwá, he went to the centre of the valley and delivered his address, every sentence of which was repeated by Rabia' bin Ommaya bin Khalf. After prayers and thanks to God he said:

(1) "Ye men! listen to my speech because I do not think that after this year of mine I shall ever meet you in this place.

(2) "Ye men! (from now onwards) till you meet your Lord, your blood and your properties are as sacred as are this day and this month.

(3) "And surely you will meet your Lord when He will ask you about your deeds and I have conveyed His message to you.

(4) "He who is entrusted with property belonging to another should deliver his trust to whom it belongs.

(5) "And all that is lent on usury is cancelled but your capitals are yours. Do not do injustice to others nor let injustice be done to you.

(6) " God has decided that there is no usury. And all interest due to 'Abbás bin Abd ul-Muṭṭalib is cancelled.

(7) " And all compensation for bloodshed in the Time of Ignorance is abolished.

(8) " After that, ye men! the evil-one has despaired of ever being worshipped in this land of yours. But he will be obeyed in other lands. Therefore be careful of your faith lest these other people diminish your good deeds.

(9) " Ye men! the postponement of sacred month is an addition of the days of disbelief.
Those who choose disbelief are misguided thereby:
They declare it sacred one year and non-sacred another year.
In order to make up the number of sacred months fixed by God, so that they make non-sacred what God has made sacred. And Time revolves, as it has been shaped since the day the heavens and the earth were created by God:
And the number of months with God is twelve of which four are sacred—three consecutive months and Rajab by itself between Jamádi and Sha'bán.

(10) " And after that, ye men! you have your rights against your wives and they have theirs against you. It is their duty to observe chastity and avoid immodesty. And if they are guilty, you are allowed to avoid intercourse

with them and to beat them without causing (serious) injury. But if they repent, you must feed and clothe them with fairness. And instruct each other to do good to your women-folk for they are assigned to you and have no control over anything by themselves. And you have taken them as God's trust and they have been made lawful to you by the Word of God.

(11) " Therefore, ye men! understand well my sayings for I have conveyed my message and I have left with you that which if you take hold of, your affairs shall not go wrong, namely the Book of God and the religious procedure of His messenger.

(12) " Ye men! listen to my speech and make sure that you understand it. You are taught that each Muslim is a brother of every other Muslim and Muslims form one Brotherhood. It is not lawful for any man to take anything of his brother's except what is given with one's own free will. Therefore do not do injustice to one another.

(13) " O God! have I conveyed my message?"

As the Prophet spoke, Rabia' asked people: " Do you know what day is this?" They replied: " The day of the great Pilgrimage." Then he (Rabia') asked: " Do you know that God has made your blood (your lives) and your properties sacred till you meet God as He has made sacred this day." They replied, " Yes" and so forth sentence by sentence. And when the

Prophet said:

"O God! have I conveyed my message?" They all shouted with one voice: "Yes".

And Muḥammad said: "O God! Thou art my Witness."

THE COMPLETION OF FAITH

AND when the Prophet had finished his address he alighted from his camel and performed the noon and the afternoon prayers together and as he did so God revealed to him:

> This day, have I perfected for you your Faith,
> And completed My blessing upon you,
> And have accepted for you AL-ISLAM as a religion.
>
> (Qur-án, 5 : 3.)

The Prophet immediately recited this verse to all present.

The Prophet left 'Arafát about evening and passed the night at Muzdalfa saying the evening and night prayers together at the latter place.

In the morning he alighted at Masha'ril Ḥarám and went on to Mina and passed the Jamarát (stone-throwing stations) on his way. He then sacrificed 63 camels one for each year of his life and 'Alī sacrificed the remainder of the 100 camels which Muḥammad had brought from Medīna. The Prophet then shaved his head and the Ḥajj was completed.

This Ḥajj is called "The Farewell Pilgrimage" because it was the last Pilgrimage of Muḥammad. It is also called the "Pilgrimage of the Message", for Muḥammad delivered his message to all men and directed those who were present to convey it to those who were

absent so that it might be carried to all succeeding generations. It is also called " The Pilgrimage of Islám" for Islám was perfected this day for ever and for ever, and Muslims who are true to their Faith are carrying it on and conveying it to those who are present in their age. As God says:

> It is He who has raised up amongst an unlettered people a messenger from amongst themselves who recites to them His signs, and purifies them and teaches them the Book and the wisdom, although before this they were in a clear error.
>
> And to others from among them who have not joined them yet, for He is all-Mighty, all-Wise.
>
> (Qur-án, 62 : 2-3.)

And again says God:

> Say: " God is a Witness between you and me,
> And this Qur-án has been revealed to me that I may warn you therewith and those whom it reaches;...
>
> (Qur-án, 6 : 19.)

When Abu-Bakr heard the verse about the Faith being perfected on the Day of the Farewell Pilgrimage he wept because he realised that the message having been completed, the day when Muḥammad would meet his Lord and depart from his companions was not far off.

And the Prophet had most clearly pointed that out in the opening sentence of his speech. And the writer of this book feels in the same way as did Abu-Bakr. The writing of these pages has been the greatest happiness of his life but there is an end to all things except the One:

> There is no deity but He,
> All things are going to perish except His Being...
>
> (Qur-án, 28 : 88.)

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ELEVENTH YEAR OF HEGIRA

MUHAMMAD THINKS OF THE FUTURE: THE FALSE PROPHETS

AFTER the "Farewell Pilgrimage" the Arabs scattered to their homes carrying with them the memories of their journey to Medīna and Mecca and of the glorious message of Muḥammad. They all realised that Muḥammad's mission was now fulfilled and Muḥammad himself knew that his end was not far off. But he was not the man to think of resting on his laurels or on his achievements. His paradise was the welfare of his people. The Arabs had become Muslims, but what about Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and Abyssinia? These countries must also hear the Voice of God repeated five times a day.

The Kesra of Persia had torn Muḥammad's letter. The Governor of Syria had scorned his message and threatened to attack him; and at Mūta three Muslim generals had sacrificed their lives for the cause of Islám. Their martyrdom was a challenge to the Muslims, and Muḥammad began to make his preparations to turn the tables on the Romans. But before he could do so, new dangers threatened him in Arabia. They say "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery" and many a clever poet and speaker thought of imitating Muḥammad

and declaring himself to be a prophet. One of these self-styled prophets was Ṭulaiḥa Za'īm bin Asad of Nejd. He claimed to be a prophet and a messenger. But he was afraid of Muḥammad and waited to declare himself till after Muḥammad's demise. It was then that Khálid bin Walīd defeated him and he became a Muslim.

But Musailma (the Liar) was more daring. He sent word to Muḥammad that he (Musailma) was also a prophet like Muḥammad and that half of the earth belonged to him and half to the Quraish. The Prophet replied to Musailma: "From Muḥammad the Prophet of God to Musailma the Liar. The earth belongs to God and He causes it to be inherited by whom He pleases from His virtuous servants and peace be on him who follows the guidance."

Aswad 'Ansi of Yemen was the third claimant. He claimed to be a magician and practised his art in secret till he had a big following. He expelled Muḥammad's agents from Yemen, advanced towards Najrán, killed Ibn Badhán the late ruler of Yemen and married his widow. His power spread in Yemen. He imprisoned or killed Muḥammad's new agents sent to Yemen. But God delivered the Muslims from his atrocities. His own wife killed him as a revenge for the murder of her first husband, Ibn Badhán. Yemen was rid of the pretended sorcerer and tyrant.

MUHAMMAD'S PREPARATIONS FOR MEETING THE ROMANS

MUHAMMAD and the Romans knew that the clash between the Muslims and the Christians was inevitable. The

Romans would have invaded Muḥammad's territory long ago had it not been for their fear of these terrible warriors who did not fight to win or to conquer but to die. The Romans being men of experience and skilled in the arts of government knew how dangerous it was to stir up the Muslims. Muḥammad also knew that the enemy was only waiting till his own followers became weak and lazy when they would be an easy prey to the trained legions of Byzantium.

With characteristic energy he immediately ordered an army to proceed to Syria under Usáma, son of Zaid bin Ḥárith. Zaid was Muḥammad's freed slave but Muḥammad had put him above all his kinsmen and above all his most intimate companions in the Battle of Mūta. He did the same now with regard to Usáma who was barely 20 years old.

He ordered Abu-Bakr and 'Omar to follow Usáma and they willingly accepted to follow a mere youth at Muḥammad's bidding. "We hear and we obey" that was their contract with God and they carried it out. If Muslims did the same thing to-day they would again become great. But the leaders and followers must all be actuated by the same spirit of one for all and all for one as animated Muḥammad and his followers. And it must be remembered that Zaid and Usáma did not accept the office of a leader for the sake of honour only. They undertook the leadership to lay down their lives in the cause of Islám.

And Muḥammad ordered Usáma to go by the boundaries of Balqá' and to enter the enemy's territory

via Palestine close to Mūta where his father had been killed and to attack God's enemies early in the morning and to carry the war to its bitter end and when God gave him the victory not to stop there but to come home immediately.

As has been previously pointed out in this book it is the custom with Arabs to choose a place outside the town where caravans gather before they start on a journey, and in case of war or a big gathering it takes some days before the caravan and its provisions are ready for the start.

In accordance with this custom, Usáma took up his station at Jurf, not far from Medīna, in order to collect his arms and army.

MUHAMMAD'S LAST SICKNESS

WHILST preparations for the collection of the army were going on Muḥammad fell ill. People did not know what to do, and the army remained at Jurf awaiting the turn of events. Muḥammad's sickness started in the month of Ṣafar (the 2nd month) of 11 A.H. He was suffering from the effects of the poison administered to him at Khaibar by his Jewish hostess. He had fever and headache. In spite of his sickness he went on with his duties, going to the mosque and leading the prayers. He himself, however, knew that his end was near.

He could not sleep at night. The effect of the poison was disturbing his nervous system. On or about the fourth night of his sickness, he got up and accompanied by his attendant he went to the graveyard of the Muslim

martyrs to pay them his last visit. He told his attendant: "I have been ordered to ask God's forgiveness for the souls of the departed, accompany me." They went and he prayed to God for their forgiveness. Muḥammad never forgot any of his followers—not even the dead. He was the best of friends that mankind ever had and though now sick unto his death he was doing his duty to his departed companions. When he had finished, he told his attendant: "I was given the keys of the treasures of the world and lasting assurance of their enjoyment, and then of Paradise. I chose the meeting of my Lord and Paradise."

The next morning, Muḥammad went to 'Áisha's house and complained of severe headache and told her he was feeling great pain and constantly said: "O my head! my head!" But still he would not lie down on bed, and continued to attend to his wives. Five days more passed like this. When he was in the house of Maimūna he became so weak that he could hardly get up. He called all his wives and asked them in whose house he should pass his days of sickness. Such was his regard for the feelings of his wives and of all men. They all consented to the house of 'Áisha. Supported by 'Alī bin Abu-Ṭálib and his uncle 'Abbás he moved to 'Áisha's place with great difficulty.

His condition became worse. But he would still go to the mosque to lead the prayers. More days passed and he heard people say that he had appointed a boy to lead the Anṣár and Muhájirīn to war with the Romans. He was now hardly able to move, so

great was his pain and his headache. He would, however, not let people be in doubt. He ordered his wives to pour seven skinfuls of cold water on his head till it was cooled when he said: "It is enough, it is enough." He put on his clothes, tied his head with a band, went to the mosque and took his seat on the pulpit. He praised God, said prayers for the martyrs of Oḥod and others and asked God's forgiveness for their souls and lengthened his prayers on their behalf and then said: "Ye men! carry out the mission of Usáma. By my life, if you have been saying anything against his leadership you said the same about his father before, whilst he is the fittest person for this leadership as was his father."

Then he remained silent for a while and continued: "There was a servant of God whom God gave the choice of this life and of the hereafter against what was with Him and the servant chose what was with God." He again became silent and the people were puzzled but Abu-Bakr understood that the person spoken of was Muḥammad himself. Abu-Bakr could control himself no longer. He wept and said: "Nay, we will offer our lives and our sons for thee." Muḥammad made a sign to Abu-Bakr to hold his peace and then said: "Let all doors opening on the mosque be locked except the door of Abu-Bakr." When that had been done he said: "I know no one who has been a better companion to me than he (Abu-Bakr), and if I was to take any man as my *Khalīl* (the most intimate friend) I would choose Abu-Bakr. But his companionship and

brotherhood in faith is enough till God join us with Himself."

Muḥammad now wanted to return to the house of 'Áisha but went on saying:

" Ye Muhájirīn, I command you to help the Anṣár in all good things, because men will increase (as time passes) but the Anṣár, under the circumstances will decrease. They gave me shelter. Therefore return their good deeds with good deeds and pass over their mistakes."

He then left and entered 'Áisha's house but the speech, only parts of which are given above, had been a terrible strain on his nerves which had been artificially cooled down by the effect of cold water. His condition now became serious. He still wanted to go to the mosque and speak to men about Usáma's expedition, about the necessity of union amongst Muslims when he had expired and about a great many other things but each time he tried to get up he fainted. This happened three times and then he ordered that Abu-Bakr should lead the prayers in his stead. This together with the previous sermon was a clear indication from him that he wanted Abu-Bakr to be the leader of the Muslims after his death.

'Áisha, daughter of Abu-Bakr, asked the Prophet three times to excuse him (Abu-Bakr) as he was too tender-hearted and given to weeping when reciting the Qur-án and, three times, the Prophet repeated his command. Abu-Bakr, therefore, became his deputy. One day when Abu-Bakr was absent, 'Omar led the prayers. The Prophet recognised his voice from his place and said: "Where is Abu-Bakr?" People understood that he (Muḥammad) wanted Abu-Bakr to be the

Khalīfah after him.

More than a fortnight had passed since Muḥammad fell sick and his condition was now very grave indeed. His daughter Faṭimah visited him daily and he used to kiss her. When he was dangerously ill, she came one day. He kissed her as usual and whispered to her something and she cried. Then he whispered to her again and she laughed.

'Áisha questioned her, after the Prophet's death, as to this weeping and laughing and Faṭimah replied: "The first time he told me that he would not recover from this illness and I cried. The second time he told me that I would be the first of the family to join him and I laughed". So that, not only men but women in Islám also loved to die.

It is also stated that in the early days of his illness the Prophet said to 'Áisha: "How would you like dying in my life-time so that I might say prayers over your body and bury you?" She replied: "If I were sure of that, I would immediately go to my parents' house and come back dressed as a bride."

He was now being consumed by the fire of the poison and its fever and had to dip his hands in cold water and wash his face constantly to keep the heat down.

One day, while he was in this condition and his companions came to see him, he said: "Come here, I will cause you to write something so that you will never fall into error." Some of those present said: "The Prophet of God is suffering from pain and you have the Qur-án with you and the Book of God is sufficient unto

us." Others wanted the writing to be carried out. When Muḥammad saw them quarrelling over it, he said, "Go and leave me alone."

Usáma and his army now returned to Medína as the Prophet was in an extremely dangerous condition. Usáma came to see him. The Prophet raised his hand and prayed for him and then put his hand on Usáma's head to show his approval of him.

The Prophet's family thought he was suffering from pneumonia and prepared some medicine for him but he refused to take it. When he was unconscious they poured the medicine down his throat. On his regaining consciousness he asked all the people in the house to take the same medicine as a punishment for disobeying his orders.

Muḥammad had seven *dinars* in his possession and being afraid that they might be left behind he had them distributed to the poor. He did not want to meet his Lord and have it said that he had any wealth left behind him.

Muhammad's Shortlived Recovery

THIS was the last night of Muḥammad's life, Sunday 11th of Rabī' ul-Awwal, 11 A.H. The fever seemed to leave him a bit and in the morning he was able to tie his head and supported by 'Alī and 'Abbás he ventured out from 'Áisha's house into the mosque ('Áisha's house was practically part of the mosque and separated from it by a mud partition). Abu-Bakr was leading the prayer.

The Muslims were in their prayers and when they

saw him come out they were so happy that they very nearly broke their prayers. Abu-Bakr felt what was happening and wished to retire from the leadership but Muḥammad touched him from behind as a sign to go on with his business and himself said his prayers by the side of Abu-Bakr. The Prophet said his prayers sitting down whilst Abu-Bakr led the prayers.

When the prayers were over he addressed the people loud enough to be heard outside:

"Ye men! the fire (of hell) is blazing and persecutions (or disturbances) in Faith are coming like a piece of dark night. And I tell you, by God, do not attribute to me anything (which does not belong to me). Surely, by God I have not declared anything lawful which the Qur-án has not made lawful nor have I made anything unlawful which the Qur-án has not made unlawful. And God disapproves of those people who make their tombs as their mosques."

The Muslims are Happy

THE Muslims thought that the Prophet had recovered and that there was no more danger. Usáma came and asked his permission to go with his army to Syria. Abu-Bakr congratulated him saying, "I see thee, O Prophet of God, in good health by the grace of God and His blessing as we wish thee to recover!" and asked his permission to go out of Medīna to bring his wife and he got the permission of the Prophet to go to Sunḥ where his wife lived. 'Omar and 'Alī also left to attend to their affairs and the Muslims dispersed well pleased and happy

after they had despaired of the life of the Prophet the previous day. Muḥammad returned to the house of 'Áisha exhausted more than ever.

His head was resting on the lap of 'Áisha when he saw someone coming with a tooth-brush. He pointed towards it. 'Áisha took it and made it soft for him. The Prophet cleaned his mouth and said :

" O God, help me in the agony of death."

'Áisha says : " I felt as if he was getting heavier in my lap. I looked at his face when his eyes looked up in a stare and he said:

" 'Nay, (I choose) the Companion on High in Heaven (or Paradise).' You say, ' Have I made my choice ?' " Yes, I have, and I swear by Him Who has sent thee with the truth'."

This is the conversation between Muḥammad and the Angel of Death. Muḥammad is being offered the choice of recovery or the meeting of his Lord and he chooses to meet his Lord in Heaven.

The choice was accepted by God and lo! the praised one, Muḥammad, was with the One Who Is Always PRAISED!

" All praise belongs to God, Lord of all the Worlds " !

APPENDIX I

MUHAMMAD'S MARRIAGES

A Refutation of the Lying Accusations of European Writers

EUROPEAN biographers are amazed at the success of Muḥammad's mission and his victorious march as a leader of mankind. No reformer, no king, no warrior, has ever been able to influence mankind as did Muḥammad. In twenty-three years he transformed the savage Arabs into the best organized body of men, although circumstances were heavily against him. That is admitted even by the writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

"At the time of Muḥammad's birth and youth nothing seemed less likely than that the Arabs should presently make their triumphal entrance into the history of the world as victors over Greeks and Persians." *

The facts of Muḥammad's life and his unique conquest over the hearts of his followers are unquestionable. The other conquests over the Greeks and Persians followed as a consequence of his conquest of hearts.

Such a fascinating, honourable, charming and lovable man commands the respect and obedience of all mankind. But European writers are born anti-everything that is not European. The colour prejudice nourishes itself in their vitals.

For centuries they have called themselves Christians, but they have never been Christians. They have always been nationalists or Europeans, and nothing else. They despise all

* Page 545, 9th Edition, Vol. 16.

non-Europeans. Each country in Europe has modified Christianity to suit its own nationalism. Religion is, and has been, with the Europeans, a mere matter of expediency.

We see in our own day that Russia, under the Bolsheviks, has cast off Christianity and become an atheist country. Germany under Hilter is anti-Jewish, and anti-Catholic. The religion of Germany is Germanism. The religion of Italy is Mussolini-ism, and of France nothing but love of France. England has always been a self-loving country. America is a land where kidnapping of Lindberg baby is the pastime of its underworld, and sensational posters the delight of its upperworld.

It is only natural for writers of European countries to throw mud on those who do not belong to them and who are not of the same colour as they are. This is a malady for which there is no cure.

> In their hearts there is a disease,
> And this disease does God increase to them ;
> And for them is a painful agony,
> On account of what they lied.
>
> (Qur-án, 2 : 10.)

For three centuries, they have cried themselves hoarse over their accusations of Muḥammad being a licentious man, an imposter, a murderer, a liar and all other vile epithets which their imaginations could suggest and their hearts could accept. And they go on repeating these lying accusations believing that some of the mud they throw may stick. But they might, just as well, spit at the moon fancying that their spitting will reach the upper regions. Muḥammad requires no defence. God is his Defender. The Europeans may soon be throwing mud at the holy persons of Jesus and Virgin Mary.

And what proof have these writers of Muḥammad being a licentious man ? Nothing but the fact that after he was

53 years old, he gradually contracted a number of marriages which they dislike, and the further fact that whilst he limited the number of wives to his followers at a maximum of four he made an exception of the law in his own case.

The fact that Muḥammad had many wives at a certain stage of his life, namely, after his Emigration to Medīna is undisputed but Abraham, David, Solomon and many other prophets and saints of the Old Testaments had many wives. Were they all licentious men ? God forbid such an accusation !

As to the law, the limitation of the number of wives was fixed at the end of the Eighth year of the Hegira and Muḥammad had married all his wives before that period. He was told by God to keep those whom he had married but was forbidden to marry any more. If he divorced his wives, or if they became widows as the majority of them did, they could not be remarried. Out of respect for the Prophet, they were called " Ummhát ul-Muminīn " or " Mothers of the Faithful ". This was all the special legislation allowed to him.

He was the Ruler of the State of Arabia when the Revelation came in favour not of Muḥammad but of his wives—that they need not be divorced, and also against them that they must not remarry after his death. And all of them remained widows till their death.

The question is: " Should there be any special privileges regarding the family of a ruler of a country ? " It was published the other day in the newspapers that the will of King George V was not subject to the laws governing the wills of his subjects, and that is as it should be. If subjects begin to scrutinize the personal wills of their rulers, the relationship of ruler and the subject must become strained. The very fact that a man is ruler over others gives him a status different from his subjects. Muḥammad was subject to law but it was God's Law, not the law of his European biographers. Rulers always had and must

have special privileges and the writer could mention scores of such privileges. But let that suffice. The accusation that Muḥammad was a licentious man because he married so many wives is absolutely false and without foundation of fact. Muḥammad's marriages were all marriages that were forced upon him, or marriages of protection of the females whose husbands had died in the Cause of God and whom he took into his household or, lastly, marriages especially contracted to cement the bonds of love with those who could by their position and influence be of service to Islâm. In every single case, it was a personal sacrifice on the part of Muḥammad to have contracted the marriage, or circumstances obliged him to do so whilst there was as yet no law limiting the number of wives.

His marriages will now be considered seriatum.

First Marriage with Khadijah

MUHAMMAD'S first marriage with Khadījah has been fully described in Chapter V of this book. He was then in the full strength of his manhood and had lived an exemplary chaste life. His age then was 25. She was 40 and a widow twice over. The proposal of marriage came from her. She was rich and he was poor. And his guardian-uncle, Abu-Ṭálib, was burdened with a big family and was also poor. Muḥammad accepted the proposal and it turned out to be a most happy marriage. For twenty-five years thereafter they lived together till she died at the age of 65. And during these 25 years he never thought of marrying again in spite of the fact that during the last 15 years of their marriage she was old, past child-bearing age and he was still a strong man. He always cherished her memory in the most loving terms, so much so that 'Àisha was jealous of her as she never was jealous of his other wives who were alive. She used to say to Muḥammad,

"Why do you mention an old woman so often when God has given you better wives?" And his reply was: "No, she loved me and was the first to believe and I loved her."

Is that consistent with the accusation of Muḥammad being a licentious man? For a strong and comparatively young man to live with an old wife and not to think of marrying another was possible for Muḥammad because he was devoted to the service of God. There was no *purdah* amongst the Arabs then. There was no law or custom restricting Muḥammad to marry another woman. He never even raised his eyes towards another woman. He was content and controlled his desires for full 15 years between the ages of 35 and 50. During these years, Muḥammad had sacrificed his personal comfort a thousand times for the sake of Islam. That he lived and prospered was due to God only. He had killed his evil passions and all worldly desires. He was a man possessed of the purest heart.

Muhammad's Second Marriage with Sauda bint Zama'

WHEN Khadījah died, Muḥammad had a family of two unmarried daughters on his hand. He was still in full manly power and could have chosen a young wife. He was single. But the wife he chose was a widow—Sauda *bint* Zama'. Sauda was a Muslim and had emigrated with her first husband Sakrán bin 'Amr to Abyssinia. She also had a son named Abd ur-Raḥmán. Was this the act of a licentious man—marrying a widow of one of his faithful followers with a son as an encumbrance?

Marriages with 'Aisha and Ḥafsa

THESE marriages were contracted to cement his relations with his ministers, Abu-Bakr and 'Omar, just as he gave his own daughters to 'Othmán and 'Alī. All this was done for the sake of Islám and not for the sake of satisfying any personal

desires. Ḥafṣa was also a widow of one of the martyrs of Badr named Khanais. 'Omar offered her hand to Abu-Bakr and 'Othmán but they refused. Ḥafṣa, like her father, was a strong-minded woman and not quite young. Muḥammad was now over 54 years old. There is no evidence of a holy man having been content with one wife and turning suddenly licentious after the age of 53. And Muḥammad had led an exemplary life and was always legally married. He was the man who proclaimed adultery as a capital sin. European writers condone adultery but condemn marriage.

Marriages with Zainab bint Khuzaima Umm ul-Masákīn and Umm-Salama

*Z*AINAB Umm ul-Masákīn (the mother of the poor) was a widow of 'Abdullah bin Jaḥash, a martyr of Oḥod. Muḥammad took her under his protection but she died soon afterwards.

Umm-Salama was also a widow of Abu-Salama who had been dangerously wounded at Oḥod and died in 4 A.H. Muḥammad was 57 years of age when this marriage was contracted.

It must be remembered that the death-roll at Badr, Oḥod and the murder of 77 teachers of religion by the treachery of the Arabs had widowed nearly half the Muslim women at Medīna, and Muḥammad was not the only man who was contracting these marriages of protection and necessity. He was setting an example to his companions and they all had to take this extra burden on their heads. These were not marriages of pleasure but of absolute and dire necessity. Abu-Bakr, 'Omar, 'Othmán, and all the rest had their share of this burden. Women could not be left to look after themselves and the punishment for fornication and adultery was respectively 100 strokes of the leather in public and death. What Muḥammad was doing for the preservation

of the morality of his people is interpreted as licentiousness by his opponents. Truly none are so blind as those who won't see.

Marriage with Zainab bint Jaḥash

MUHAMMAD'S marriage with this lady (*Z*ainab bint Jaḥash) provides the Western scandal-mongers with the most fanciful stories. She was on her mother's side, daughter of Umaimah bint 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and so a cousin of Muḥammad. She had been like a sister to him and Muḥammad had known her and seen her all his life. There was no *purdah* and no secrecy between them. If she was a model of beauty as European writers allege, her charms were known to Muḥammad for a long time past.

The Arabs were a most proud race and had always treated their slaves with great harshness, and they looked upon them with great contempt even when they were emancipated. In fact, a slave was always a slave, just as a *Sudra* amongst the Hindus always remained a low caste, no matter what his personal merits were. He was born low. Muḥammad had come to abolish this inequality for ever. Slaves and free men were all equal in the eyes of God and he alone was most honourable who was most reverent to God. (*Inna akramakum 'ind-Alláh-i-atqákum*—Qur-án, 50 : 13).

No one, amongst the Arabs, dare make himself the equal of his slaves though emancipated.

Muḥammad set the example as he did in all other cases.

He asked his emancipated slave, *Z*aid bin Ḥárith, to marry *Z*ainab bint Jaḥash and grand-daughter of the great 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib.

*Z*aid was afraid to do it. *Z*ainab would not have it, but Muḥammad insisted because he had to abolish the unjust rules as to the inequalities amongst men.

God approved of Muḥammad's proposal. God had His own plans as yet unknown even to Muḥammad himself. The plans of God spread wide and sure and no man can escape therefrom. God revealed to Muḥammad about this proposed marriage. " And it is not fit for a believing man or a believing woman, when God, as well as His messenger, has decided an affair, that they should have any choice in their affair."

Hence neither *Zaid* nor *Zainab* had any choice. They were married. But forced marriages are seldom lasting. And it was so in this case. *Zainab* boasted of her nobility to *Zaid* and was a woman gifted with the power of speech. *Zaid* could not bear it. He complained to the Prophet. The Prophet advised patience. In matrimonial matters, however, the advice of superiors is seldom of much effect. At last, *Zaid* divorced her. It was not *Zaid* who did so but it was the Will of God. God ordered Muḥammad to marry her. Muḥammad thought that *Zaid* was his adopted son and was often called *Zaid* bin Muḥammad instead of *Zaid* bin Ḥárith and it was against Arab custom to marry an adopted son's widow or divorced wife. What could Muḥammad do ? But God's commands must be obeyed. God said that an adopted son was not a real son and his wife had not the status of a real daughter-in-law. The Arab custom must be abolished once for ever and Muḥammad himself was chosen to be God's first agent to do so. Says God :

> Nor has He made your adopted sons your (real) sons ;
> These are your words spoken with your mouths :
> But God speaks the truth and He guides in the (right) path.
> Call them by their (real) father's names, thatis more equitable in the sight of God. (Qur-án, 53 : 4-5.)

So that *Zaid* could no longer be called bin Muḥammad. As to marrying his divorced wife God was also explicitly clear :

> And when thou didst say to him whom God had blessed and whom thou hadst blessed : " Keep thou thy wife and reverence God."

And thou wast concealing in thy mind what God was going to disclose and thou wast afraid of the people.

And it is more righteous that thou shouldst be afraid of God.

Therefore when Zaid had had his want of her, We married her to thee that there might be no barrier upon the Faithful in the marriage of the wives of their adopted sons when they have had their want.

And God's order was bound to be carried out.

(Qur-án, 33 : 37.)

He sacrificed his will to the Will of God. He was a Muslim. These are the facts about this marriage.

Marriages with Juwairiya and Ṣafia

BOTH these marriages and the circumstances under which they took place have been mentioned in the body of this book. Juwairiya was the daughter of Ḥárith bin Ḍarar and was a captive of war. Her father married her to Muḥammad as an honour to himself and his daughter and this was the cause of the freedom of all the war prisoners of Banu Musṭaliq. This marriage might rightly be called a marriage for the sake of Charity and Brotherly Love. It was by such deeds that Muḥammad won the hearts of the Arabs.

As to Ṣafia she was the daughter of a Jewish chief (Huyyai bin Akhṭab) and the widow of another Jewish chief Kinána (killed at Khaibar). It was not fit for any Muslim to take a lady of such rank as a captive of war and though the Prophet gave her to Diḥya bin Kalbi he was obliged to take her back to himself. She was a Jew by birth but Muḥammad loved her as much as he loved any Arab wife of his. Once when Ḥafṣa or 'Aisha called her the daughter of a Jew and not equal to an Arab lady, she complained to the Prophet. The Prophet told her: " Why did not you say 'Hárūn is my (fore) father, Moses my uncle and Muḥammad my husband, how can you be better

than I'?" Ṣafia loved the Prophet dearly and he returned her love.

Marriages with Umm-Ḥabība and Mária

THE first of these two marriages was a marriage of necessity as Umm-Habība was a widow of 'Abdullah bin Jaḥash who had emigrated to Abyssinia and died there. Muḥammad married her by proxy, and this also was a marriage to win over the unbelieving Quraish as she was the daughter of Abu-Sufyán, the chief of the Quraish. In fact, it may be said that the conversion of Khálid and the weakening of Abu-Sufyán's opposition to Muḥammad was greatly influenced by this marriage. It showed them that Muḥammad was not their enemy but one who wished them well and it was a folly to fight such a good and honourable kinsman.

Mária was sent to Muḥammad as a gift by the Ruler of Egypt and he could not possibly hand her over to another as it was against all kingly rules.

Marriage with Maimuna

THERE only remains one more marriage to explain, *viz.*, that of Maimuna. She was divorced by her first husband Ḥárith. She then married one Abu-Raḥm and was widowed. She made a gift of her person to the Prophet and lived up to 51 A.H.

This finishes the whole list of the Prophet's marriages. Up to the age of 53 he had only one wife. Then in seven years he contracted all his other marriages. When he was sixty years old, at the end of the Eighth year of Hegira, God sent the Revelation about the limit of marriages :

> And if you fear that you will not be able to do justice to the orphan (girls)
> (By taking them in marriage),
> Then marry whom you like
> From amongst other women,
> Two at a time, or three, or four :

> But if you are afraid that even then you will not be able to keep equality
> (Amongst your wives),
> Then (marry) only one
> Or that which your right hands have possessed:
> This is nearer to keeping you from doing an injustice.
> (Qur-án, 4 : 3.)

The Arabs, like most other people, used to take rich orphan girls under their control as their wives. God asks them to do these girls justice and if they fear they cannot do justice by marrying them, they should choose other women as wives. According to this commandment, Muslims who had more than four wives at that time were forced to divorce the extra ones. But what about Muḥammad? If he divorced his wives, who was to marry them? There would be rivalries and bloodshed, and rival families would be fighting each other till the end of the world. New causes for war might arise amongst Muslims and people might boast of their descent from the Prophet's wives.

God made the retention of his married wives lawful for Muḥammad but commanded him to marry no more in any event whatsoever.

> Hereafter no more wives are allowed thee nor (is it allowed to thee) to change them for other wives even though their beauty surprise thee—excepting what thy right hand possesses:
> For God is Guardian over all things. (Qur-án, 33 : 52.)

This is the truth about Muḥammad's marriages. He left nine widows and each of them led an exemplary chaste life till her death. They were collectively called *Ummahát ul-Muminīn* or " Mothers of the Faithful." May God bless them all and His Noble Prophet Muḥammad for ever and for ever!

APPENDIX II

EXCERPTS FROM EUROPEAN WRITERS ON MUHAMMAD AND ISLAM

(1) *Muhammad Sincere and not an Impostor*

"THE question of the imposture of Mahomet is one which may best be left to the candid reader, who, from the records of his life, will judge how far he has laid himself open to so grave an imputation. That he was the impostor pictured by some writers is refuted alike by his unwavering belief in the Truth of his own mission, by the loyalty and unshaken confidence of his companions, who had ample opportunities of forming a right estimate of his sincerity, and finally, by the magnitude of the task which he brought to so successful an issue. No impostor, it may safely be said, could have accomplished so mighty a work. No one unsupported by a living faith in the reality of his commission, in the goodness of his cause, could have maintained the same consistent attitude through long years of adverse fortune, alike in the day of victory and the hour of defeat, in the plenitude of his power and at the moment of death."[1]

(2) *The Extent and Permanence of Muhammad's work. The Glory of Muhammad*

" Judged by the smallness of the means at his disposal, and the extent and permanence of the work he accomplished, no name in the world's story shines with a more specious

1. *Islam and its Founder*, by J. W. H. Stobart, p. 231, (1876 edition).

lustre than that of the Prophet of Mecca. To the impulse which he gave, numberless dynasties have owed their existence, fair cities and stately palaces and temples have arisen, and wide provinces became obedient to the Faith. And beyond all this, his words have governed the belief of generations, been accepted as their rule in life and their certain guide to the world to come. At a thousand shrines the voices of the Faithful invoke blessing on him, whom they esteem the very Prophet of God, the seal of Apostles, now passed into the highest heaven as their intercessor with the All-Merciful Allah. Judged by the standard of human renown, the glory of what mortal can compare with his ?"[1]

(3) *The Excellent Morals of the Qur-án*

" Thus the duty of helping the poor, of relieving the needy traveller, and of doing justice to the orphan, is insisted on. The love and honour due to parents from their children, the performance of covenants, and the use of just weights, form part of the believer's duty. Liberality is commended, profuseness condemned. The Prophet points out, how, at the end of the world, our words, our thoughts, nay, the very use of our eyesight, will be brought into account and he states, how desirable it is for the true believer to love God, to pray to Him, and to walk humbly in His sight (Sura XVII)."[2]

(4) *Muhammad and Miracles*

" On this head it may be remarked that Mahomet always disclaimed the power of working miracles, and assumed no higher honour than that of being a Prophet sent by God—'a warner', an apostle—the instrument of communicating God's

1. *Islam and its Founder*, by J. W. H. Stobart, p. 228.
2. *Ibid.* p. 138.

will to men; and the honesty of his conduct in this respect speaks well for him, and implies a perfect reliance on the goodness of his cause.

To those who demanded from him some miraculous proof of the truth of his claims, he pointed to the Koran—a book revealed to 'an ignorant and unlearned man', as the greatest of miracles, and he assured the objectors that if not convinced by it, no sign, however stupendous, would have power to compel their belief."[1]

(5) *The Scheme of Salvation Prescribed by Islam*

"The Koran, as above explained, however much its followers may have departed from its teachings, repudiates the idea of any vicarious sacrifice for sin, teaches expressly that each soul must account for itself to God, and denying the truth of the Christian redemption, lays upon each individual the task of atoning for his sin, of securing pardon, and of rendering himself meet for admission to Paradise. Self-righteousness, the merit of good works, and of a rigid attention to the prescribed formularies and ceremonies of their faith, with God's mercy to supply any possible deficiency, these constitute the scheme of salvation prescribed by Islam."[2]

(6) *Muhammad's Marriages*

"Mohammed's numerous marriages after Khadijah's death have been attributed by many European writers to gross passion, but they would seem to have been mainly dictated by motives of a less coarse kind. Several of his alliances were political in character, the Prophet being anxious to bind his

1. *Islam and its Founder*, by J. W. H. Stobart, p. 112.
2. *Ibid.* p. 233.

chief followers more and more closely to himself. This was doubtless his object in marrying the daughters of Abu-Bakr and Omar; while a political motive of a different sort is to be found in his alliances with the daughters of political opponents or fallen enemies. Victory over an enemy would seem to have been consummated only when the enemy's daughter was introduced into the conqueror's harem. The remainder are to be explained by his extreme anxiety to have a son."[1]

The above extract from one of Muḥammad's most vicious critics is of great value as rebuttal of the views of other equally vicious critics.

(7) *The Successful Termination of Muhammad's Work*

" His political work was not left half finished at his death: he had founded an empire with a religious and a political capital; he had made a nation of a loose agglomeration of tribes. He had given them a rallying-point in their common religion, and therein discovered a bond more permanent than a dynasty. The old faiths which had survived so long in secluded Arabia had been given their death-blow." [2]

It is, however, very pleasant to come across a most learned Christian author named Dr. Henry Stubbe, M.A., of Christ Church, Oxford, born on the 28th of February, 1631, and who died on 12th July, 1676, whose Manuscript was copied by Charles Hornsby of Pipe Office, in 1705 and was published in 1911 under the auspices of the Islamic Society by Luzac

1. *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, by D. S. Margoliouth, 1905, pp. 176-77.

2. *Ibid.* p. 471-72.

Note.—I have very carefully scanned the pages of Margoliouth's book on Muḥammed and have not found a single chapter or part of a chapter in which he has not tried to give a false colouring of his own to the facts of Muḥammad's life.

& Co., London, under the name of "An account of the Rise and Progress of Mahomedanism with the Life of Mahomed."

This early author refutes the Christian accusations against Muḥammad and Islam. A few extracts from this work are given below but the book must be read to be enjoyed.

(8) *Justice of the Muslim Wars*

"It is a vulgar Opinion that 'Mahomet propagated his Doctrine by the Sword,' and not only compelled the Arabians at first to receive his Religion but obliged his Successors by a perpetual Vow or Precept to endeavour the Extirpation of Christianity and all other Religions, thereby to render his own universal. But how generally soever this be believed, and how great men soever they be who support it, yet is it no other than a palpable mistake. It is very true that Mahomet did levy warr in Arabia, but it was with the object of restoring an old Religion, not to introduce a new one. He taught his followers to abolish idolatry everywhere, and that all the World was obliged to the profession of these truths, that there was one God, that he had no Associates, that there was a Providence, and a Retribution hereafter proportionate to the good or ill Actions of Men, just as the Jews thought themselves obliged to bring all Mankind (as farr as in them lay) under the observation of the Law of Nature contained in the seven precepts of Noah. But that all Mankind were to be forced to the profession of his Religion, or that he compelled any thereto, is a falsehood. Yet had it been so, it is plain that many Christian Doctors have held that Christianity may be enforced, and that it is a just Cause for one Prince to invade and conquer another's Territories, to propagate the true Religion thereby. They say that if one King may chastise and reduce under obedience the subjects of another, they may do as much for the Lord paramount of the Universe. That Kings

are the Ministers of God to execute Wrath upon such as do Evil, and that being the Viceroys of the Almighty they ought to assert the Glory, Cause, and Sovereignty of God, that it may be everywhere submitted to. We are not without many Examples of such Actings. Amongst the Jews Hyrcanus compelled the Idumæns to be circumcised and turned Jews, and all the Christian Histories furnish us with instances of the like Nature. It is also true that several Christian Doctors teach that a Nation guilty of enormous Crimes may be invaded, and that it is a just pretence of war to reclaim them from notorious wickedness, it being lawful to compel them to observe those laws of Nature whereto God hath originally subjected them.

"These and sundry other Titles of War are treated of and maintained by the Divines who write concerning the Spanish Rights over the Indians. But tho' the Christian Doctors and some Popes have urged them, and thereby prepared Apologies for Mahometans, I do not find that Mahomet proceeded any further in Arabia the desart than to exterminate Idolatry, but not to force Men to profession of Islamism. He himself gave Letters of security and protection to the Jews and Christians in Arabia, and never used any Violence to them upon the Account of Religion. At Medina such Jews as peaceably paid Tribute continued unmolested (tho' mortally hated), until the days of Omar, the son of Alchittabi, who expell'd them out of Arabia, he being told that Mahomet had prohibited that two different Religions should be tolerated within that Country, the Seat of Empire. But tho' they were thereupon expell'd thence (which was rather an Act of Civil prudence than Religion), yet were they not compelled to Mahometanism, nor banished his other Territories.

"The same Omar gave the Christians the following security upon the taking of Jerusalem: 'In the name of God,

merciful and gracious, from Omar, the son of Alchittabi, to the inhabitants of the City of Aelia. Security and protection is granted as to their persons, Children, Wives, estates, and all their Churches, that they be neither destroyed, alienated, nor prohibited the Christians to resort to.—And when Amurus, the Saracen General, under Abubecr, beseiged Gaza, He made this declaration to the Christian Governour thereof: Our Lord hath commanded us to fight and Conquer you, except you will embrace our Religion, and so become our Friends and Brethren, pursuing the same Comon Interest with us, so you will have us your faithful Allies: but if you will not accept of these terms, then submitt to pay us Tribute yearly, yourselves and your Posterity for ever, to us and our Successors, and we will protect you against all opposition whatsoever, and you shall be in League with us; if you agree not hereunto, then the Sword must decide our Rights, and we will not desist until we have subdued you, and put in Execution the Will of God.

"By this Declaration it is manifest that the Mahometans did propagate their Empire, but not their Religion, by force of Arms." (Pages 180-82.)

(9) *The Reasonableness of the Muslim Articles of Faith*

"Let us now lay aside our prejudices and see what there is amiss in the Mahometan Religion. Their Articles of Faith are few and plain, whereby they are preserved from Schisms and Heresies, for altho' they have great diversity of opinions in the explication of their Law, yet, agreeing in the fundamentals, their differences in opinion do not reach to that breach of Charity so common among the Christians, who thereby become a scandal to all other Religions in the world. Their Notions of God are great and noble, their opinions of the Future State, as I have shewn, are consonant to those of the

Jews and Christians. As to the moral part of their Religion, if we consult Hottinger, who has taken the pains to transcribe a great many of their precepts out of the books of the Mahometans, we shall see that it is not inferiour to that of the Christians. And lastly, their Religious Duties are plainly laid down, which is the cause that they are duly observed, and are in themselves very rational, tho' perhaps some of them were retained or instituted partly upon a political Account, as has been don by the wisest Legislators in all Ages.

"Thus two of the five Articles before mentioned seem to be established upon prudential Reasons, I mean the Pilgrimage to Meccha and the Fast of Ramadan. For tho' Mahomet retain'd many Arabian usages (and such I have shewed this pilgrimage and Fast to have been), his aim being only to perform the old Religion, and not to introduce a new one, yet I believe he the rather continued these two points upon a prudent foresight that they would be of great use in a military Empire such as he designed, to the support whereof valiant and hardy Soldiers were necessary, and nothing could more conduce to the successive generation and education of such than these two institutions; for how active, laborious, and abstinent must the Women as well as the Men render themselves, to be able to endure the fatigue of the pilgrimage or the hunger of the Fast. The Pilgrimage I have described largely; the Fast is movable, and every year happens a Month later in the year preceding so that it falls sometimes in Summer, other times in Winter, in the hottest and coldest Seasons, the longest as well as the shortest dayes, and is observed so strictly that from day-break to star-light not one (except travellers and sick persons) doth eat or drink anything, or so much as wash his Mouth with a little Water; nay, the most dissolute persons who at other times adventure to drink Wine, will not then so much as smell to it. It is true that at night when the Emaum or Priest declares it

to be time to eat, they feed plentifully, even to excess, and even this hath its reason upon Account of health, for this fasting and feasting in such extreams contributes to their health during the whole year. It is commended by Celsus to the healthy, not to live by rule, but use a variety in Diet, lest they contract a Custom, the change whereof would bee as dangerous as the continuance inconvenient and inconsistent with daily Action and business.

"I also believe that the third Precept, concerning Alms, was political in its Original, for Mahomet having persuaded his followers into such a Parsimony as was requisite to the making of them hardy, and to the making of them welcome in their quarters, that they might not lapse from his Institutions, and be debauched by riches, he obliged them to those extraordinary Alms, which was a kind of Grecian levelling Law. Mahomet calls it *Z*acot (*Z*acat), which signifies as much as Increase, as if the giving Alms to the needy were the principal means to augment their Riches, and this he inculcated to them that they might not grow effeminate through Luxury or mutinous by means of their Riches.

" Neither was there less Prudence in the precept concerning Prayers, for the injunction of the Sallah five times in twenty-four hours obliged them to a diligence and sobriety which, perhaps, no other contrivance could have engaged them to, and doth also imprint in them a sense of their Religion which without Apostacy nothing can obliterate. Besides it is a part of that precept never to mention any Prophet or Person whom they reverence but with this Eulogy, God's Peace be with him! of glorious memory, etc.; nor any Enemy of their Religion, but thus, God's Curse be upon him! God keep him from hurting us, etc., which saying did fix them more and more in their Religion and estrange them more and more from their adversaries." (Pp. 168-70.)

(10) The Condition of Christianity at the Time of Muhammad's Birth

" This was the Condition of Christianity in which Justinian found it about the year 540. He by his Conquests subdued the Arrian Goths and Vandals in Italy and Affrick, and by severe Laws established and enforced the Trinitarian Religion, and suppressed the different Sects and Religions in the Empire, abusing the Jews, persecuting the Arrians and all other Hereticks (except it be true that he favoured the Eretychians), he raigned thirty-nine years. After him succeeded Justinus the Second, Tiberius, Mauritius Phocas, and Heraclius, in whose dayes arose Mahomet. It is observable that in all these times there was such a general Corruption of Manners, and Christianity was so depraved, that the Church of England and other Protestants in general reject the authority of them, and admit no general Councils after that of Chalcedon, under the Emperor Martianus. Their Reigns suggest nothing considerable to the subsequent Discourse, but that Christianity was then degenerated into such a kind of Paganism as wanted nothing but the ancient Sacrifices and profess'd Polytheism, and even as to the latter there wanted not some who made three Gods of the Trinity, others made a Goddess of the Virgin Mary, the Reverence to the Saints differed little from that of the Pagans to their Heroes and lesser Gods, and then were Images brought into Churches, tho' not by publick authority." (Pp. 46-47.)

(11) The Romance of Islam

" The end was evidently rapidly approaching, sick in body, and emaciated in frame, it remained for Muhammad only 'to busy himself in the praises of his Lord, and to seek for pardon.' Such, in his own words, was *now* his mission. No longer able

to visit in turn the homes of his numerous wives, he announced his intention of betaking himself to the abode of Ayisha, who had from the first possessed an inscrutable hold over the affections of her husband. Faithful to her charge, the youthful wife—she was at this time but twenty years of age—watched and tended the bedside of her aged lord and master; the affection of so young and beautiful a damsel for the aged and infirm Prophet was touching and pathetic. It was the *romance* of Islam. Prostrate with fever, and scarce able to move from his couch, the Apostle of God felt that his end was at hand; so repairing, though with tottering steps, to the Mosque, he there, amidst the tears and sobs of his faithful followers, addressed them in accents of mingled pride and affection. But the excitement of the occasion was too much for his exhausted strength, and for some days the flame of existence flickered in the socket; at length, however, the paroxysm of pain passed away, and finding a slight return of strength, the Prophet again appeared before the congregation. It was a striking scene—the Mosque, at all times full when Muhammad was present, was on this occasion, the memorable 8th June, 632, thronged to suffocation, for the dangerous condition of his illness had become known throughout the city. With slow and weary steps the venerable Prophet, supported by two attendants, repaired to his accustomed spot; too weak to lead the devotions, the task devolved upon the faithful Abu Bakr; yet 'the Lord verily had granted unto Muhammad refreshment in prayer,' and mustering the feeble remnants of his decaying strength, he spoke with emotion as to the single-mindedness of his actions, and his belief in his mission. But the effort severely taxed his emaciated frame and feeble energies, and on reaching his apartments he was seized with an attack of delirium. Ayisha thereupon lifted his right hand, and rubbed it to restore animation, repeating at the same time an invocation which the Prophet himself had been wont to use

when visiting the sick. It may well be imagined his weak body could ill bear such rough, though affectionate usage; so, on recovering his consciousness, he begged that he might be left quiet. He then muttered a scarce audible prayer: 'Lord, grant me pardon, and join me to the companionship on high'. Too weak to continue his devotions, he lay back on his bed, and there was stillness, interrupted at times with ejaculations, 'Eternity in Paradise. Pardon! Yes, the blessed companionship on high!' Grand, noble expressions were these, the last words which hung on the lips of the dying Muslim. After a few moments, perceiving a change, Ayisha, with her arms around her lord, looked up as the grey head grew heavy on her breast. It needed not the instinct of a ministering angel to realize that the soul of the Prophet of Arabia had winged its way to the Mansion in the skies...... Such was Muhammad: such his life, such his death!"[1]

(12) *The Miracle of the Qur-án*

"It is asserted by the Muslims that each Prophet who has appeared in the world, has performed miracles in that department of skill or science which flourished in his particular age; thus, Moses was a magician, Jesus healed the sick, while Muhammad produced a work which, for its eloquence and beauty of diction, was unrivalled by any of the compositions of its time. This circumstance is deemed to stamp the Quran as having a divine origin, and indeed to this miracle, for such it is considered in Islam, Muhammad himself appealed for the confirmation of his mission, publicly challenging the most learned and gifted men of the day to produce a single chapter to compare with the book which he alleged God had whispered into his ear. The challenge was accepted, and a poem written by Labid Ibn Rabia, one of the greatest wits in Arabia, being

1. Wollaston's *Muhammad: His Life and Doctrines*, pp. 66—68.

fixed up on the gate of the temple of Mecca, an honour allowed to none but the most esteemed performances, none of the other poets durst offer anything of their own in competition with it. But the second chapter of the Quran being placed by its side soon after, Labid himself (then an idolator) on reading the first verses only, was struck with admiration, and immediately professed the religion taught thereby, declaring that such words could only proceed from an inspired person.

"That Muhammad's boast as to the literary excellence of the Quran was not unfounded, is further evidenced by a circumstance, which occurred about a century after the establishment of Islam. The story runs that in those days a body of religious 'Nihilists', by seeing the enormous power which the Quran exercised over the hearts of the Faithful, commissioned a certain Ibn al Muqaffa, a man of profound learning, unsurpassable eloquence and vivid imagination, to produce a book to rival the emanation of Muhammad's pen. Ibn al Muqaffa agreed, but stipulated that he should be allowed a period of twelve months wherein to accomplish his task, during which time all his bodily wants should be supplied, so that he might be enabled to concentrate his mind on the task which he had undertaken. At the expiration of half the allotted interval his friends, on coming to make inquiries as to his progress, found him sitting, pen in hand, deeply absorbed in study, while before him was a blank sheet of paper, and around his desk a wild confusion of closely-written manuscripts torn into pieces, and scattered indiscriminately over the apartment. In good truth he had tried to write a single verse equalling the Quran in excellence, and failed; and he confessed with confusion and shame that a solitary line had baffled all his efforts for six months, so he retired from the task hopeless and crest-fallen." [1]

1. Wollaston's *Muhammad : His Life and Doctrines*, pp. 142-43.

Note.—The spiritual influence of the Qur-án over the minds of Arabs who understand the language of the Qur-ân was far greater even than its

literary elegance. The fact is that the harmonious intermingling of sound, sense and force of the language of the Qur-án is beyond human prowess. And the marvel is that although Arabic is a language which is highly inflexional and involved, the wording of the Qur-án is so crisp, clear and concise that no Arab can fail to understand it or fail to be carried away by its extraordinary appeal to the soul of man. Take for example the 112th chapter of the Qur-án which may be transliterated as follows :

" Qul-Huwa-Alláho-Ahad ;
Alláh-us-Samad :
Lam Yalid, wa lam Yūlad ;
Wa lam yakun-lahū Kufowan Ahad ".
" Say : He is GOD the ONE ;
God upon Whom depend all and Who depends upon none ;
He hath no father nor a son.
(*Lit.* He does not give birth nor is He born of any one.)
And like unto Him there is none."

The word *Samad* in the original requires nine words in English and even then it is not fully translated. From the most illiterate Beduin of the desert to the highest philosopher, every man can understand this short chapter and yet no one can exhaust its deep meaning. It is, as if the whole literature of Philosophy had been condensed into 17 words of Arabic.

Philosohers have been trying to explore the Nature of Reality and here it is, in 17 short easily comprehensible words with no verbs except the simplest ones, no nouns that are not known to the Arabs and yet so deep in meaning that no man can ever condense the Nature of Reality in a shorter compass. Add to all these beauties the fact that the diction of the Original Arabic is so marvellously interwoven with its sound that no matter what one does one cannot make any other language to come up to it. A commentary of these 17 words would require 17,000,000 words and would still be incomplete. It is a Declaration of the Truth of Islam and a Refutation of all rival creeds. The Christians say that Jesus is the son of God. This chapter refutes that as being inconsistent with the Nature of Reality. The Hindus believe that God becomes incarnate in the bodies of men (a doctrine which the Christians also borrowed from the Grecian Aryans). The Qur-án says No to this fanciful theory. God is *Samad* or Unique, and there is none like to Him, nor is He born. In order that God may become incarnate He has to be born in the body of man or some other being.

The Jews called their priests as Lords. God says No to this calling.

13. R. Bosworth Smith on Islam

Bosworth Smith, M.A., was Assistant Master in Harrow School, England, and a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford. In February and March, 1874, he delivered a series of four long lectures before the Royal Institution of Great Britain which were afterwards published under the name of "Mohammed and Mohammedanism".

Bosworth Smith has taken such pains in studying Islam and has been so fair-minded that, in spite of his Christian bias, he deserves the heartfelt gratitude of all Muslims for ever. It may, therefore, be hoped that the reader who is not already

There is no one like unto God. How could a man be like God? The priests are many, are born and are liable to death. God is Free from these limitations. And the whole chapter is a commentary or explanation of the word "Huwa" or "HE IS." The word "He" is not a pronoun in this chapter. It is a Substantive word and one of the Names of God. In fact, it is the one word which declares God to be above all attributes which we can imagine. "He is what He is", so to say, above all our imaginings and above all the apprehensions of our senses. The Whole Universe is full of this HE and when one realizes the existence of this HE or the Truth that "HE IS" one becomes free from all vaxatious troubles of the human soul. One becomes an electron moving round this Universal Nucleus of HE. And the whole Universe becomes a manifestation of HE IS, HE IS, HE IS, *ad infinitum.*

"All Praise belongs to God, Lord of all the Worlds"—worlds of Matter and Force, worlds of Spirits and Angels, worlds of Beauty and Goodness, worlds of Right and Law—worlds that we can imagine or understand and worlds which we cannot comprehend even in our imagination. Such is God and such is His Praise for He makes and remakes all worlds ; He takes care of them, He sets them in motion and in due course makes them reach their determined end. He is the First and the Last, the APPARENT and the HIDDEN. He knows all things. In fact, HE IS and all things are comprehended in His knowledge whilst no knowledge can comprehend Him except what He is pleased to make us comprehend. And our knowledge is not comparable to a drop of water out of an oceanful of knowledge.

Who can ever compete with the Qur-án? No one. Muslims may come and Muslims may go but the Qur-án will remain because God Himself is its Guardian.

acquainted with him (be he Muslim or non-Muslim) will peruse the following excerpts from the book above named (published 1876 London: Smith, Elder and Co., 15 Waterloo Place) with great interest and advantage to himself.

(*A*) *Christianity and Islam in Africa*

" As to the rapid spread of Islam, Dr. Barth says that 'a great part of the Berbers of the Desert were once Christians, and that they afterwards changed their religion and adopted Islam;' and he describes 'that continual struggle which, always extending further and further, seems destined to overpower the nations at the very Equator if Christianity does not presently step in to dispute the ground with it.' He remarks in another place, that Mohammedans alone seem able to maintain any sort of government in Africa; and, what is more important, that there 'is a vital principle in Islam which has only to be brought out by a reformer to accomplish great things'.

" On the other hand, the Rev. Edward Blyden, a native African of the purest Negro blood, a Christian missionary who has given the energies of his life to extending education and founding schools in the interior of Liberia, and who has learned by experience to deal with Mohammedan prejudices against Christianity, writes to me as follows. It may be worth while to add that he is now Principal of the Presbyterian High School in Monrovia, West Africa, that he was quite unknown to me before, and is known to me now only by his writings and his reputation.

> It is curious, how at a distance from the scene and only from 'the study of books in the European languages, and from reflection upon the materials they supply,' you have arrived at precisely the same conclusions with regard to the character and influence of

Mohammedanism in Africa which I have reached after years of travel among, and intercourse with, the people. Your remarks as to the superiority of the Mohammedan Negro are quite in accordance with my own observation and experience. If those Christians who are so unmeasured in their denunciations of Mohammedanism could travel, as I have travelled, through those countries in the interior of West Africa, and witness, as I have witnessed, the vast contrast between the Pagan and Mohammedan communities—the habitual listlessness and continued deterioration of the one, and the activity and growth, physical and mental, of the other; the capricious and unsettled administration of law, or rather absence of law, in the one, and the tendency to order and regularity in the other; the increasing prevalence of ardent spirits in the one, and rigid sobriety and conservative abstemiousness of the other—they would cease to regard the Musalman system as an unmitigated evil in the interior of Africa.

"It is melancholy to contrast with widespread beneficial influences of Mohammedanism, on which I have insisted, the little that has been done for Africa, till very lately, by the Christian nations that have settled in it, and the still narrower limits within which it has been confined. Till a few years ago the good effects produced beyond the immediate territories occupied by them were absolutely nothing. The achievement of Vasco de Gama, for which Te Deums were sung in Europe, proved for centuries to be nothing but the direct curse to Africa. If the Oceanic slave trade has been, to the eternal credit of England in particular, at last abolished by Christian nations, it cannot be forgotten that Africa owes also to them its origin, and on the West Coast, at all events, its long continuance. The message that European traders have carried for centuries to

Africa has been one of rapacity, of cruelty, of selfishness, and of bad faith. It is a remark of Dr. Livingstone's that the only art that the natives of Africa have acquired from their five hundred years' acquaintance with the Portuguese, has been the art of distilling spirits from a gun-barrel; and that the only permanent belief they owe to them is the belief that man may sell his brother man; for this, he says emphatically, is not a native belief but is one to be found in the track of Portuguese." (Pp. 49-52.)

(B) *Explanation of Muhammad's Marriages*

"It should be remembered, however, that most of Mohammed's marriages may be explained, at least, as much by his pity for the forlorn condition of the persons concerned, as by other motives. They were almost all of them with widows who were not remarkable either for their beauty or their wealth, but quite the reverse. May not this fact, and his undoubted faithfulness to Khadijah till her dying day and till he himself was fifty years of age, give us additional ground to hope that calumny or misconception has been at work in the story of Zeinab? There are some indications on the face of it, besides those mentioned in the text, that this is the case. For example, Zeinab was the Prophet's cousin, and there was nothing to prevent his having married her himself when both he and she were younger, instead of giving her in marriage to his freedman." (P. 136, Note.)

(C) *The Consistency of Muhammad's Life*

"Rigid consistency in itself is no great merit rather the reverse: what one has a right to demand in a great man is that the intensity of the central truth he has to deliver should become, not less, but more intense; that that flame shall burn so clear as to throw into the shade other objects which shine with

a less brilliant light; that the essence shall be pure even if some of the surroundings be alloyed; and this, I think, if not more than this, with all his faults, we may affirm of Mohammed. On the whole the wonder is to me not how much, but how little, under different circumstances, Mohammed differed from himself. In the shepherd of the desert, in the Syrian trader, in the solitary of Mount Hira, in the reformer in the minority of one, in the exile of Medina, in the acknowledged conqueror, in the equal of Persian Chosroes and the Greek Heraclius, we can still trace a substantial unity. I doubt whether any other man, whose external conditions changed so much, ever himself changed less to meet them; the accidents are changed, the essence seems to me to be the same in all.

" Power, as the saying is, no doubt put the man to the test. It brought new temptations and therefore new failures, from which the shepherd of the desert might have remained free. But happy is the man who, living

'In the fierce light that beats upon a throne,
And blackens every blot,'

can stand the test as well as did Mohammed." (Pp. 140-41.)

(D) *Magnanimity of Muhammad after the Conquest of Mecca*

" There was now nothing left in Mecca that could thwart his pleasure. If ever he had worn a mask at all, he would now, at all events, have thrown it off; if lower aims had gradually sapped the higher, or his moderation had been directed, as Gibbon supposes, by his selfish interests, we should now have seen the effect; now would have been the moment to gratify his ambition, to satiate his lust, to glut his revenge. Is there anything of the kind? Read the account of the entry of Mohammad into Mecca, side by side with that of Marius or Sulla into Rome. Compare all the attendant circumstances, the outrages

that preceded, and the use made by each of his recovered power, and we shall then be in a position better to appreciate the magnanimity and moderation of the Prophet of Arabia. There were no proscription lists; no plunder, no wanton revenge." (P. 142.)

(*E*) *Muhammad's Reliance on God*

"The spell of his untaught eloquence recalled them to themselves, and we are assured that his defeat at Ohud advanced his cause as much as did his victory at Bedr.

"Here is a story which illustrates the nature of the revenge which the Prophet lived to take. He was one day sleeping under a tree alone, and at a distance from his camp, when he awoke and beheld Durthur, his deadly foe, standing over him with a drawn sword. 'O Mohammed', cried he, 'who is there now to save thee?' 'God,' said the Prophet. Struck with awe, Durthur dropped his sword; Mohammed seized it, and exclaimed in his turn, 'Oh Durthur, who is there now to save thee?' 'No one', replied Durthur. 'Then learn from me to be merciful;' and with these words he gave him back his sword, and made him his firmest friend." (P. 153.)

(*F*) *What Muhammad swept away*

R.B. Smith referring to the useless dogmas and disputations of the Christians and the empty claims of the Jews says:

"The sceptre departed from Judah, but the Jewish exiles in Arabia still clung desperately to the phantom of those proud religious privileges when all which had given some claim to them had disappeared. Christians too, such Christians as Mohammed had ever met, had forgotten at once the faith of the Jews, and that higher revelation of God given to them by Christ which the Jews rejected. Homoousians and Homoiou-

sians, Monothelites and Monophysites, Jacobites and Eutychians, making hard dogmas of things wherein the sacred writers themselves had made no dogma, disputing fiercely whether what was mathematically false could be metaphysically true, and nicely discriminating the shades of truth and falsehood in the views suggested to bridge over the abysmal gulf between them; turning figures into facts, rhetoric into logic, and poetry into prose, had forgotten the unity of God, while they were disputing about it most loudly with their lips. They busied themselves with every question about Christ except those which might have led them to initiate Christ's life. Now Mohammed came to make a clean sweep of such unrealities. Images: what are they? 'Bits of black wood, pretending to be God;' philosophical theories and theological cobwebs. Away with them all! God is great, and there is nothing else great. This is the Musalman Creed. 'Islam,' that is, man must resign his will to God's, and find his highest happiness in so doing. This is the Musalman life. (Pp. 159-60.)

(G) *Muhammad not a Fatalist*

"He (Muḥammad) inculcates hope in adversity, and humility in success, on the ground that there is a supreme Ruler who never leaves the helm; who knows what is really best for man when man himself does not; and whose supreme will and power, where He asserts them, cannot be crossed by the efforts of the creatures of His hand. But this is not the only side to his teaching. He asserts that man is a free agent; free to refuse or to accept the Divine message, responsible for his acts, and therefore deserving, now of punishment, now of reward. The future, in fact, is in his own hands, and Mohammed incessantly urges him to use his opportunities. Ali, the most saintly, I would almost say the most Christian, of all Musalmans, pronounces those who say the will is not free to

be heretics." (Pp. 193-94.)

(H) *Muslim and Christian Wars Compared*

"The sword may silence, it cannot convince: it may enforce hypocrisy, it can never force belief. But this has not always seemed so self-evident; and I say it deliberately and with all the force of conviction, compared with the war of the Confederate States in the nineteenth century for the perpetuation of slavery, compared with our own Japanese wars for the extension of our trade, our Chinese wars for the sale of opium, and our miserable African wars waged for the possession of a territory which we bought, and had no moral right to buy, from those who sold what they had no moral right to sell, the Mohammedan wars for the propagation of a comparatively pure religion and a higher morality were, in their time and according to their light, inasmuch as they were not purely selfish, I do not say excusable, but they were at least intelligible and natural." (P. 220.)

(I) *The Unity of Islam*

"'A Musalman first and a Turk, an Afghanor an Arab afterwards', is no mere formula or figure of speech with that vast assemblage of peoples and of tongues to whom the Prophet of Arabia, by teaching them to worship the one true God, has given a bond of union stronger than any tie of blood or nation; and that, by means which were nobler and with objects that were higher than those which Papal Rome is striving, in these latter days, to implant a similar feeling in the Catholic. Sublime and Eternal and Unchangeable as its God, Islam appears to its votaries a religion worthy at once of the worshipper and of the Being that he worships; and is it for us to say that it is not so?" (P. 306.)

(J) Muhammad the very Prophet of God

"Mohammed to the end of his life claimed for himself that title only with which he had begun and which the highest philosophy and the truest Christianity will one day, I venture to believe, agree in yielding to him—that of a Prophet, a very Prophet of God." (P. 344.)

(14) *Extracts from Major Arthur Glyn Leonard's "Islam, Her Moral and Spiritual Value" published by Luzac and Co., 1909.*

(*A*) *The Genius of Muhammad*

"But in the case of Islam there can be no mistake. True, the Arabs in themselves were a great and virile people. But it was the genius of Mohammed, the spirit he breathed into them through the soul of Islam, that exalted them. That raised them out of the lethargy and low level of tribal stagnation, up to the high water-mark of national unity and Empire. It was in the sublimity of Mohammed's deism, the simplicity, the sobriety and purity it inculcated, the fidelity of its founder to his own tenets, that acted on their moral and intellectual fibre with all the magnetism of true inspiration. To them Islam was the Faith—the Faith of God". (Pp. 122-23.)

(*B*) *Light and Truth*

"To thoroughly comprehend the spirit of Mohammed or the soul of Islam, the student himself must be thoroughly in earnest and sincere. He must in addition possess that moral, mental and intellectual sympathy which gives the ego an insight into human subtleties as well as simplicities. He must take Mohammed and Islam as he finds them—in the same intensely sincere spirit that constituted the one and inculcated the other. He must at the outset recognize that Mohammed was no mere spiritual pedlar, no vulgar time-serving vagrant, but one of

the most profoundly sincere and earnest spirits of any age or epoch. A man not only great, but one of the greatest—*i.e.*, truest—men that Humanity has ever produced. Great, *i.e.*, not simply as a prophet, but as a patriot and a statesman: a material as well as a spiritual builder who constructed a great nation, a great empire, and more even than all these, a still greater Faith. True, moreover, because he was true to himself, to his people, and above all to his God. Recognizing this, he will thus acknowledge that Islam is a profound and true cult, which strives to uplift its votaries from the depths of human darkness upwards into the higher realm of Light and Truth." (Pp. 20-21.)

(C) *The Design of Muhammad*

"Personal ambition and aggrandizement never for a moment entered his head or formed part of it. The national good, to be attained only by a national or universal God—the one and only God of the universe—was the one great ambition that inspired and impelled him. Because although every one for himself and God for us all is presumably a natural law, Mohammed managed to evade it. But in evading it he was not revolutionary. On the contrary, in this way he rose one step upward above the lower human level towards that higher humanity which approaches the divine.

"This design, as I have just said, originated from the doctrine of divine unity attributed to Moses and Abraham. Indeed, as one reads the Koran carefully and steadily through from beginning to end, it is manifested in every surah—almost in fact on every page. The whole work, in fact, is saturated with the one idea, inspired by the one thought. Everywhere there is evidence of the final object in view, the unconquerable will, the inflexible resolve, the fixed purpose, the indomitable perseverance, the unyielding persistency, the infinite and

interminable patience, the calm endurance, the irresistible courage, and the grim tenacity of the ego." (P. 28.)

(*D*) *God and Muhammad*

" An idea is a spark falling upon straw "...(quoting Dumas). " Thus it was with Mohammed. God was the spark, the vital spark of spiritual flame, and this humble but honest Arab trader was the straw that after twenty years of silent but tenacious smouldering, God had set a light to." (Pp. 37-38.)

(*E*) *Good and Evil*

" But of all the passages in the Koran, the following is, in many ways, one of the most significant : " Whatever good befalleth thee, O man, it is from God; and whatever evil befalleth thee, it is from thyself ". It is obvious from this that the Prophet believed evil to be a human weakness with man as an active and self-willed agent. Sale in a note thereon says : " These words are not to be understood as contradicting the preceding verse, that all is from God, since the evil that befalls mankind, though ordered by God, is yet the consequence of their own wicked actions.

" But as Mohammed regarded the sublime divinity of God, it would be more accurate to interpret the *evil* not as being ordained or even sanctioned by God, but as being permitted, or rather not prevented by Him as a thing inevitable. To him the purity, sanctity and inviolability of God was of such vast moment, that it was unjust—a mortal sin—to devise even a lie against Him. ' And who is more unjust than he who deviseth a lie against God, that he may seduce men without understanding.' " (Pp. 37-47.)

(*F*) *The Practical Nature of Islam*

" Mohammed's sincerity and fixity of purpose is a fact we cannot get away from. It is this which has chained his

followers as with the sure cord of God to the Faith. Islam, in a word, is a creed of practice, not theory. By practice it was formed. On practice it lived. It was because Mohammed practised what he preached, that the small seed of his original idea blossomed at last into the mighty 'Igdrasil' of the East—the great banyan tree of existence. Verily this sun-burnt son of Arabian Petræa was a tangible reality and no desert simulacrum. A reality that lives in the soul of Islam. A reality that will endure until the end of all things human. It is not manners that maketh the man. It is the man that makes the manners. It is the nature that is around him, the nature that is in him, and that comes out of him as mental and moral energies, that makes the man. Town bred as he was, it was the desert in all its naked and silent grandeur that made Mohammed, that inspired him with all the might and majesty of God, and turned him into a Prophet. Yet it was his career as a trader and the inherent tribal instinct that developed the political element in him. As Longfellow says: 'Glorious indeed is the world of God around us, but more glorious is the world of God within us. There lies the land of song, there lies the poet's native land.' But in Mohammed's case, as in the case of all great workers and thinkers, the world that is around us, is the world of our inner consciousness. The two are synonymous if not one. Only with him the native earth was religion, and he was the Prophet, not the Poet of it. "It is Nature's highest reward to a true, simple, great soul, that he gets thus to be a *part of herself*.

Note.—Of all the books written by Europeans, and especially by Englishmen, none comes up to this small and yet most comprehensive treatise on Islam by Major Arthur Glyn Leonard. The late Syed Ameer Ali has written a Preface for this book and I would recommend every Muslim student to have a copy of this most charming book with him. The author is not a Muslim but in his love for the truth of Muḥammad and Islam he is above all other Christian writers. And he writes in a most charming style.

"It was thus with Mohammed. Thought, though changeable, is eternal. It never dies. So the one idea that possessed Mohammed now possesses (differing only in merely superficial degrees) some two hundred and fifty millions". (Pp. 106-07.)

(G) *True Muslims*

"In speaking of Islam and of Moslems as I have done, I have spoken of them as I have found them. Apart from a careful study of the Koran, my knowledge of both is based on personal facts and experiences as varied as they are extensive. In every clime and under a variety of conditions, I have been in touch with Moslems of all classes and shades, and have always found them animated by the same spirit—for race or colour makes no difference to the spirit of Islam. Always consistent and devout, always God-fearing ands incere as regards their Faith. Before all things religious, their cult, the creed of Mohammed—*i.e.* El Islam or self-surrender. Afghan, Arab, Baluchi, Hindustani, Somali, Turk, Egyptian, Hadendowa, Berber, Senegalese, Fulani, Hausa, Yoruba, Mandingo, Malay, I have found them in the main Islamic to the very core. In peace or war, in camp and cantonment, working and fighting with or against them, my experience of their moral consistency and spiritual stamina has been the same. Brave to a fault, endowed with the reckless courage of the Fatalist, fearless and contemptuous of death, their fidelity to their Faith, their belief in the greatness of Mohammed, and their veneration of God, is something that once it is rightly understood, can only be respected and appreciated at its true value. For my part, seeing as I have their splendid heroism in their own cause, and their touching devotion to those whose salt they have eaten, my feelings towards them is not only one of unmixed admiration and respect, but also of deep esteem and regard. Such men are worthy of Islam, as Islam indeed is worthy of them. Only the

soul—the moral and spiritual essence—of Islam could have made them what they are, could have turned out of the dregs of barbarism a human material so truly splendid." (Pp. 157-58.)

(15) *Extracts from Rodwell's Preface to his Translation of the Qur-án*

(A) *Muhammad*

"Muhammad's career is a wonderful instance of the force and life that resides in him who possesses an intense Faith in God and in the unseen world; ...he will always be regarded as one of those who have had that influence over the faith, morals, and whole earthly life of their fellow-men, which none but a really great man ever did, or can, exercise; and ...whose efforts to propagate a great verity will prosper...

"The more insight we obtain, from undoubted historical sources, into the actual character of Muhammad, the less do we find to justify the strong vituperative language of Maracci, Prideaux, and others..." (Pp. 14-15.)

(B) *Qur-án*

"It must be acknowledged, too, that the Koran deserves the highest praise for its conceptions of the Divine nature, in reference to the attributes of Power, Knowledge and universal Providence and Unity—that its belief and trust in the One God of Heaven and Earth is deep and fervent." (P. 15.)

(C) *The Qur-ān and Muslims; Islam an unquestionable blessing*

"It is due to the Koran that the occupants...of an arid peninsula, whose poverty was only equalled by their ignorance, became not only the fervent and sincere votaries of a new creed, but, like Amru and many more, its warlike propagators. (P. 15.)

"The simple shepherds and wandering Beduins of Arabia, are transformed, as if by a magician's wand, into the founders of empires, the builders of cities, the collectors of more libraries than they at first destroyed, while cities like Fostat, Baghdad, Cordova, and Delhi, attest the power at which Christian Europe trembled. And thus, while the Koran, which underlays this vast energy and contains the principles which are its springs of action, reflects to a great extent the mixed character of its author, its merits as a code of laws, and as a system of religious teaching, must always be estimated by the changes which it introduced into the customs and beliefs of those who willingly or by compulsion received it. In the suppression of their idolatries, in the substitution of the worship of Allah for that of the powers of nature and genii with Him, in the abolition of child murder, in the extinction of manifold superstitious usages, in the reduction of the number of wives to a fixed standard, it was to the Arabians an unquestionable blessing, and an accession of... Truth." (Pp. 15-16.)

(16) *Excerpts from Stanley Lane-Poole's "The Speeches and Table-Talk of the Prophet Mohammad"*

(A) *The Sayings of Muhammad Concerning Goodness*

"Say not, if people do good to us, we will do good to them, and if people oppress us, we will oppress them; but resolve that if people do good to you, you will do good to them, and if they oppress you, oppress them not again.

"God saith: Whoso doth one good act, for him are ten rewards, and I also give more to whomsoever I will; and whoso doth ill, its retaliation is equal to it, or else I forgive him; and he who seeketh to approach me one cubit, I will seek to approach him two fathoms; and he who walketh towards me, I will run towards him; and he who cometh before me with the

earth full of sins, but joineth no Partner to me, I will come before him with an equal front of forgiveness.

"There are seven people whom God will draw under His own shadow, on that Day when there will be no other shadow: one a just king; another, who hath employed himself in devotion from his youth; the third, who fixeth his heart on the Mosque till he return to it; the fourth, two men whose friendship is to please God, whether together or separate; the fifth, a man who remembereth God when he is alone, and weepeth; the sixth, a man who is tempted by a rich and beautiful woman, and saith, Verily I fear God! the seventh, a man who hath given alms and concealed it, so that his left hand knoweth not what his right hand doeth.

"The most excellent of all actions is to befriend any one on God's account, and to be at enmity with whosoever is the enemy of God." (Pp. 147-48.)

(B) *Concerning Prayer*

"No neglect of duty is imputable during sleep; for neglect can only take place when one is awake: therefore, when any of you forget your prayers, say them when ye recollect.

"When any one of you goeth to sleep, the Devil tieth three knots upon his neck; and saith over every knot, 'The night is long, sleep.' Therefore, if a servant awake and remember God, it openeth one knot, and if he perform the ablution, it openeth another: and if he say prayers it openeth the other; and he riseth in the morning in gladness and purity: otherwise he riseth in a lethargic state.

"When a Muslim performeth the ablution, it washeth from his face those faults which he may have cast his eyes upon; and when he washeth his hands it removeth the faults they may have committed, and when he washeth his feet, it dispelleth the

faults towards which they may have carried him; so that he will rise up in purity from the place of ablution." (Pp. 149-50.)

(*C*) *Concerning Charity*

"When God created the earth, it began to shake and tremble; then God created mountains, and put them upon the earth, and the land became firm and fixed; and the angels were astonished at the hardness of the hills, and said, 'O God, is there anything of Thy creation harder than the hills?' and God said, 'Yes, water is harder than the hills, because it breaketh them?' Then the angels said, 'O Lord, is there anything of Thy creation harder than water?' He said, 'Yes, wind overcometh water: it doth agitate it and put it in motion.' They said, 'O our Lord! is there anything of Thy creation harder than wind?" He said, 'Yes, the children of Adam giving alms: those who give with their right hand, and conceal from their left, overcome all.'

"The liberal man is near the pleasure of God and is near Paradise, which he shall enter into, and is near the hearts of men as a friend, and he is distant from hell; but the niggard is far from God's pleasure and from paradise, and far from the hearts of men, and near the Fire; and verily a liberal ignorant man is more beloved by God than a niggardly worshipper." (P. 151.)

(*D*) *Concerning Fasts*

"A keeper of fasts, who doth not abandon lying and slandering, God careth not about his leaving of eating and drinking.

"Keep fast and eat also, stay awake at night and sleep also, because verily there is a duty on you to your body, not to labour overmuch, so that ye may not get ill and destroy

yourself; and verily there is a duty on you to your eyes, ye must sometimes sleep and give them rest; and verily there is a duty on you to your wife, and to your visitors and guests that come to see you; ye must talk to them; and nobody hath kept fast who fasted always; the fast of three days in every month is equal to constant fasting; then keep three days' fast in every month." (P. 153.)

(E) *Concerning the Qur-án*

"Read the Korān constantly; I sevear by Him in the hands of whose might is my life, verily the Korān runneth away faster than a camel which is not tied by the leg." (P. 154.)

(F) *Concerning Labour and Work*

"A man came to the Prophet, begging of him something, and the Prophet said, 'Have you nothing at home?' He said, 'Yes, there is a large carpet, with one part of which I cover myself, and spread the other, and there is a wooden cup in which I drink water.' Then the Prophet said, 'Bring me the carpet and the cup.' And the man brought them, and the Prophet took them in his hand and said, 'Who will buy them?' A man said, 'I will take them at one silver piece.' He said, 'Who will give more?' This he repeated twice or thrice. Another man said, 'I will take them for two pieces of silver.' Then the Prophet gave the carpet and cup to that man, and took the two pieces of silver, and gave them to the helper, and said, 'Buy food with one of these pieces, and give it to your family, that they may make it their sustenance for a few days; and buy a hatchet with the other piece and bring it to me.' And the man brought it; and the Prophet put a handle to it with his own hands, and then said, 'Go, cut wood, and sell it, and let me not see you for fifteen days.' Then the man went

cutting wood, and selling it; and he came to the Prophet, when verily he had got ten pieces of silver, and he bought a garment with part of it, and food with part. Then the Prophet said, 'This cutting and selling of wood, and making your livelihood by it, is better for you than coming on the day of Resurrection with black marks on your face.'" (Pp. 155-56.)

(G) *Concerning Women and Slaves*

"The world and all things in it are valuable, but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

"I have not left any calamity more hurtful to man than woman.

"A Muslim cannot obtain (after righteousness) anything better than a well-disposed, beautiful wife: such a wife as, when ordered by her husband to do anything, obeyeth; and if her husband look at her, is happy; and if her husband swear by her to do a thing, she doth it to make his oath true; and if he be absent from her, she wisheth him well in her own person by guarding herself from inchastity, and taketh care of his property.

"Verily the best of women are those who are content with little." (P. 161.)

"He who beateth his slave without fault, or slappeth him in the face, his atonement for this is freeing him.

"A man who behaveth ill to his slave will not enter into paradise.

"Forgive thy servant seventy times a day." (P. 163.)

(H) *Concerning himself*

"I am no more than man: when I order you anything with respect to religion, receive it, and when I order you about the affairs of the world then I am nothing more than man." (P. 182.)

Description of Muhammad's Person and Characteristics

"Mohammad was of the middle height, rather thin, but broad of shoulders, wide of chest, strong of bone and muscle. His head was massive, strongly developed. Dark hair, slightly curled, flowed in a dense mass almost to his shoulders; even in advanced age it was sprinkled with only about twenty gray hairs, produced by the agonies of his 'Revelations . His face was oval-shaped, slightly tawny of colour. Fine, long arched eye-brows were divided by a vein, which throbbed visibly in moments of passion. Great, black, restless eyes shone out from under long heavy eyelashes. His nose was large, slightly aquiline. His teeth, upon which he bestowed great care, were well set, dazzling white. A full beard framed his manly face. His skin was clear and soft, his complexion 'red and white', his hands were as 'silk and satin', even as those of a woman. His step was quick and elastic, yet firm as that of one who steps 'from a high to a low place.' In turning his face he would also turn his whole body. His whole gait and presence were dignified and imposing. His countenance was mild and pensive. His laugh was rarely more than a smile.

"In his habits he was extremely simple, though he bestowed great care on his person. His eating and drinking, his dress and his furniture retained, even when he had reached the fulness of power, their almost primitive nature. The only luxuries he indulged in were, besides arms, which he highly prized, a pair of yellow boots, a present from the Negus of Abyssinia. Perfumes, however, he loved passionately, being most sensitive to smells. Strong drink he abhorred.

"His constitution was extremely delicate. He was nervously afraid of bodily pain; he would sob and roar under it. Eminently unpractical in all common things of life, he was gifted with mighty powers of imagination, elevation of mind,

delicacy and refinement of feeling. 'He is more modest than a virgin behind her curtain,' it was said of him. He was most indulgent to his inferiors, and would never allow his awkward little page to be scolded whatever he did. 'Ten years,' said Anas his servant, 'was I about the Prophet, and he never said as much as "uff" to me'. He was very affectionate towards his family. One of his boys died on his breast in the smoky house of the nurse, a blacksmith's wife. He was very fond of children; he would stop them in the streets and pat their little heads. He never struck any one in his life. The worst expression he ever made use of in conversation was, 'What has come to him? May his forehead be darkened with mud!' When asked to curse someone, he replied, 'I have not been sent to curse, but to be a mercy to mankind.' 'He visited the sick, followed any bier he met, accepted the invitation of a slave to dinner, mended his own clothes, milked the goats, and waited upon himself,' relates summarily another tradition. He never first withdrew his hand out of another man's palm, and turned not before the other had turned.

"He was the most faithful protector of those he protected, the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence; those who came near him loved him; they who described him would say, 'I have never seen his like either before or after.' He was of great taciturnity, but when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and no one could forget what he said. He was, however, very nervous and restless withal; often low-spirited, downcast, as to heart and eyes. Yet he would at times suddenly break through these broodings, become gay, talkative, jocular, chiefly among his own. He would then delight in telling little stories, fairy tales, and the like. He would romp with the children and play with their toys.

"He lived with his wives in a row of humble cottages, separated from one another by palm branches, cemented together with mud. He would kindle the fire, sweep the floor, and milk the goats himself. The little food he had was always shared with those who dropped in to partake of it. Indeed, outside the Prophet's house was a bench or gallery, on which were always to be found a number of poor, who lived entirely upon his generosity, and were hence called 'the people of the bench'. His ordinary food was dates and water, or barley bread; milk and honey were luxuries of which he was fond, but which he rarely allowed himself. The fare of the desert seemed most congenial to him, even when he was sovereign of Arabia." (Pp. xxvii—xxx.)